

# *Canadian* ART

AUTUMN NUMBER




OTTAWA

VOL. VIII. NO. 1

AUTUMN 1950

35 CENTS



## What is the hidden Eldorado quality?

You cannot see it, but you can feel it in the way Eldorado works for you—easily, almost effortlessly.

And you can see its results in your drawings and blue prints.

It means crisp, sharp, even lines every time, all the time.

It means non-feathering, non-crumbling leads, standing up under pressure.

The hidden quality is TYPHONITE! Drawings made with *Typhonite* Eldorado leads insure clean, easy-to-read blueprints. Made in 17 degrees 6B to 9H. Order Dixon's *Typhonite* Eldorado pencils from your regular source of supply.

### DIXON'S TYPHONITE ELDORADO

*Eldorado Pencils are favourites with engineers and draftsmen everywhere. If you would like a sample, just send your name and address and the degree of Dixon Typhonite Eldorado Pencil you would like to try.*

*Made in Canada by*

**DIXON PENCIL COMPANY LIMITED**  
MONTREAL - NEWMARKET - TORONTO - VANCOUVER

FINE ARTS

# CANADIAN ART

## Autumn Number

AN ILLUSTRATOR SPEAKS HIS MIND—An Interview with Oscar Cahén . . . . . Page 3

ART SCHOOLS AREN'T NECESSARILY EVIL  
by Jean Simard 9

GOOD LETTERING—AN ART TO BE TAUGHT  
by Sydney H. Watson 14

ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE FURNITURE  
YOU BUY?—A Report on the Designing of Canadian  
Furniture . . . . . 19

A COMMENT ON CANADIAN FILMS  
by Gudrun Parker 24

YES, PAINTING MIGHT BE BETTER IN TORONTO  
by Andrew Bell 28

ART IN MONTREAL—FROM GOOD TO  
INDIFFERENT . . . . . by Robert Ayre 30

COAST TO COAST IN ART . . . . . 35

NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS . . . . . 36

THE ART FORUM . . . . . 40

Cover: Prudence Herward. *The Farmer's Daughter*. National Gallery of Canada

CANADIAN ART VOL. VIII. NUMBER 1 AUTUMN 1950

PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A BOARD REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY, THE MARITIME ART ASSOCIATION, THE FEDERATION OF CANADIAN ARTISTS.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Yearly subscription: post free in Canada \$1.25, other countries \$1.50. Cheques should be made payable at par in Ottawa. 35c a copy. Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa. Advertising rates upon application. All articles are listed in the Art Index, New York, and the Canadian Index of the Canadian Library Association, Ottawa.

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES: BOX 334, OTTAWA



Bar panel for the Church of St. Peter, Toronto, by Sydney H. Watson

### Editors

Robert Ayre, Montreal  
Donald W. Buchanan, Ottawa

### Assistant Editor

Kathleen M. Fenwick, Ottawa

### Representatives

Doris Shadbolt, Vancouver  
Andrew Bell, Toronto  
C. L. Lambertson, Halifax

### Production Director

Donald W. Buchanan

### Business Secretary

Doris Myles



"The pale moon"—from the collection of Siwash Indian masks used in "The Loon's Necklace" by Crowley Films, Ottawa.

Filmed in full colour this 16 mm. motion picture is based on an Indian legend. Now in English, a French version will be released this autumn. Both will be available on loan through the Canadian Education Association, from Provincial Departments of Education, National Film Board offices, film libraries and from Imperial Oil. We are proud of our association with this truly Canadian film whose originality and freshness brought it international recognition and film festival acclaim at Edinburgh, Ottawa, Gardone Italy, Venice, New York, Brussels, New Orleans and Cleveland.



**IMPERIAL OIL LIMITED**



# The Art Gallery of Toronto

EXHIBITIONS

OCTOBER

## THREE MODERN STYLES

From the Museum of Modern Art, New York

NOVEMBER

## THE CANADIAN GROUP OF PAINTERS

---

Admission to the Gallery 25c    Saturday, Sunday and Holidays FREE  
Open Wednesday Evenings beginning October 4th    Admission 25c  
Members FREE at all times

You are invited to write for our price list of reproductions

GRANGE PARK

TORONTO, ONTARIO

# THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

FOUNDED 1860

EUROPEAN PAINTING

CANADIAN PAINTING

EARLY CANADIAN ROOMS

ARTS OF THE ORIENT, NEAR-EAST, PACIFIC BASIN, AFRICA,  
AS WELL AS OF EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS

Special Exhibitions for October, November and December to be announced.

1379 SHERBROOKE ST. W.

MONTREAL, P.Q.

## ART MATERIALS

IN A WIDE RANGE  
for the  
AMATEUR and PROFESSIONAL

Featuring  
GRUMBACHER  
WINSOR & NEWTON  
and  
REEVES ART MATERIALS

MASTER POSTER COLOURS  
PAASCHE & WOLD AIR BRUSHES

**Fraser**  
LTD.

"Your Friendly Art Store"

320 Donald St., Winnipeg, Man.  
621 West Pender St., Vancouver, B.C.

## FRANK JARMAN

LIMITED

OTTAWA ONTARIO

*We stock*

Winsor & Newton's and  
Reeves Artists' Materials

Oil and Water Colours, Fine Drawing  
Papers, Canvas, Brushes, etc.

GRUMBACHER PRE-TESTED OIL  
COLORS

GRUMBACHER CASEIN COLORS  
GRUMBACHER FINEST WATER  
COLORS

PRE-TESTED BRISTLE BRUSHES  
RED SABLE ARTISTS' BRUSHES

**Loomis and Toles Limited**

159 King Street West

Toronto

## 1950 ARTISTS OF DISTINCTION

Kenneth C. Lochhead, Ottawa, Ont.

Joseph Purcell, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Ghitta Caiserman, Montreal, P.Q.

John Bennett, Toronto, Ont.

Clive Peacock, Toronto, Ont.

Pierre de Ligny Boudreau, Quebec, P.Q.

Timothy Phillips, Toronto, Ont.

Robert B. Cowan, Toronto, Ont.

Roland Proulx, Montreal, P.Q.

Charles Dawe, Barrie, Ont.

Marjory E. Rogers, Woodstock, N.B.

Jack K. Harman, Toronto, Ont.

Fred Ross, Westmount, P.Q.

Bruce H. Johnson, Toronto, Ont.

Artis Shreve, Toronto, Ont.

Roy Kiyooka, Opal, Alta.

Ronald J. Spickett, Toronto, Ont.

Bernard McLoughlin, Toronto, Ont.

Winners of the O'KEEFE'S Art Awards, builders of Canadian traditionary Art. Their work was selected from 600 entries by the outstanding Art Jurors, L. A. C. Panton, Fred Brigden, A. J. Casson and Charles Comfort.

THE CANADIAN ART LABORATORY adds its congratulations to all the winners and to the outstanding schools and teachers who introduced them to art expression.

The Canadian Art Laboratory in its field matches the progress of Canadian Art with matchless permanent artists Oils, Gouaches, Watercolors, Temperas and materials for artists with the same jealous effort to give the best.

*"Our 1950 catalogue is now ready"*

**CANADIAN ART LABORATORY LIMITED** 530 Eastern Avenue, Toronto  
AMACO Modelling Clays, Crayons, Chalks, Finger Paint, Textile Colors now made at our  
Canadian Factory, Palmerston, Ont.

All Phone Calls—GE 5932

**Sir George  
Williams School**

of  
**ART**

OF THE MONTREAL Y.M.C.A.

Professional and leisure-time training in all branches of fine and commercial art, including drawing and painting, water colour, oil, modelling and sculpture, poster design, fashion drawing, illustrating, advertising art. Three studios. Individual instruction, co-educational. Day courses September to June; evening courses October to May. Special Saturday morning class for school pupils. Information from Registrar.

**1441 DRUMMOND ST.**

**MA. 8331**

**WINSOR & NEWTON "London" Oil Colours**

A range of colours of exceptional quality at a reasonable price. These colours are made entirely from genuine pigments and are ground in pure Poppyseed and Linseed Oil.

**Ser. 1 Studio Tubes ea. 40c**

Burnt Sienna  
Burnt Umber  
Flake White

Indian Red  
Ivory Black  
Raw Sienna

Raw Umber  
Terre Verte  
Venetian Red

Yellow Ochre  
Zinc White

**Ser. 2 Studio Tubes ea. 60c**

Alizarin Crimson

Ultramarine Light

Ultramarine Deep

Zinc Yellow

**Ser. 3 Studio Tubes ea. 75c**

Cadmium Orange  
Cadmium Red Light  
Cadmium Red Deep  
Cadmium Yellow M.

Cadmium Yellow P.  
Cerulean Blue  
Cobalt Blue

Perm. Green Lt.  
Rose Madder  
Viridian

Winsor Blue  
Winsor Green  
Winsor Lemon  
Winsor Violet

Flake White ½ lb. Tubes ea. 60c

*All Winsor & Newton Colours Reduced in Price*

**IDEAL**

Artist Cotton Canvas  
Covered

**SKETCHING BOARDS**  
to fit your Box

Raw Edges

4" x 6".....10c. 12" x 16".....55c.  
5" x 7".....15c. 14" x 18".....60c.  
6" x 8".....18c. 16" x 20".....85c.  
8" x 10".....22c. 18" x 24".....\$1.35  
9" x 12".....30c. 20" x 28".....\$1.60  
10" x 14".....40c.



**1387 St. Catherine St. W.  
Montreal 25, Que.**

**SKETCHING BOXES  
& PALETTES**

**12" x 6"**

3 Ply B.C. Fir ..... 9.50  
3 Ply Mahogany ..... 12.00  
Aluminum ..... 20.00  
3 Ply 9 x 12 ..... 5.00  
Box & Easel 12 x 16 38.00  
Metal Box  
12 x 16 no palette . 6.50

*'the name for the artist'*

# ROWNEY

**OIL COLOURS**  
**WATER COLOURS**  
**POSTER COLOURS**  
**AND ALL ARTISTS' MATERIALS**

The House of Rowney is a family business founded in London in 1789, and there is still a Rowney directing the business.

The name Rowney has been the first for artists in all that long span. All Rowney materials are made in England by craftsmen who have, in many instances,

been in the business throughout their working lives.

These personal factors are allied to an unceasing technical interest in the manufacture of colours and all materials for the use of the artist.

You can buy no better in the world than Rowney materials for the artist.

**GEORGE ROWNEY & CO. LTD., LONDON, ENG.**

---

*Sole Canadian Representative*

**A. R. DAVEY COMPANY**  
**36-38 Wellington East, Toronto**

# HUGHES - OWENS

*Distributors in Canada for*



## *Artists' Materials*

---

### **"LONDON" OIL COLOURS**

*Now!*

SERIES 1	. . . . .	.40 TUBE
SERIES 2	. . . . .	.60 TUBE
SERIES 3	. . . . .	.75 TUBE
WHITES (STUDIO)	. . . . .	.40 TUBE
WHITES (½ LB.)	. . . . .	.60 TUBE

### **THE HUGHES - OWENS CO. LIMITED**

MONTREAL  
VANCOUVER

TORONTO  
EDMONTON

WINNIPEG  
OTTAWA





# TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

***The National Gallery of Canada offers to responsible art organizations in Canada a well established service of travelling exhibitions. Additional bookings are now being made for the following:***

- \*Scottish Painters. *Available May onwards*
- \*Paintings by Arthur Lismer, R.C.A. *Available July onwards*  
Pegi Nicol MacLeod Memorial Exhibition. *Available February onwards*
- \*Canadian Group of Painters. *Possibly available Spring 1951*
- \*Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour, 1950.  
*Available November onwards*
- \*Canadian Society of Graphic Art, 1950. *Available November onwards*  
Society of London Painter-Printers. (Original colour prints).  
*Available March onwards*  
Colour Lithographs by Contemporary British Artists.  
*Available November onwards*
- \*Paintings and Drawings by Children of the United States.  
*Available November onwards*
- †What is Modern Painting? *Available November onwards*  
The Development of Painting in Canada (descriptive panels).  
*Available November onwards*
- †Three Post War Houses. *Available November onwards*
- †Elements of Design. *Available November onwards*  
Progress through Design (descriptive panels from the Royal Architectural  
Institute of Canada). *Available November onwards*  
Design in Industry (photographic panels). *Available November onwards*  
What an Art Centre can do for Your Community.  
*Available November onwards*
- †Look at Your Neighbourhood. *Available November onwards*  
\*New exhibitions. †Descriptive panels from the Museum of Modern Art.

**Charges on a pro rata basis. Further information on request.**

## THE LOUIS CORINTH MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

is scheduled to be shown in

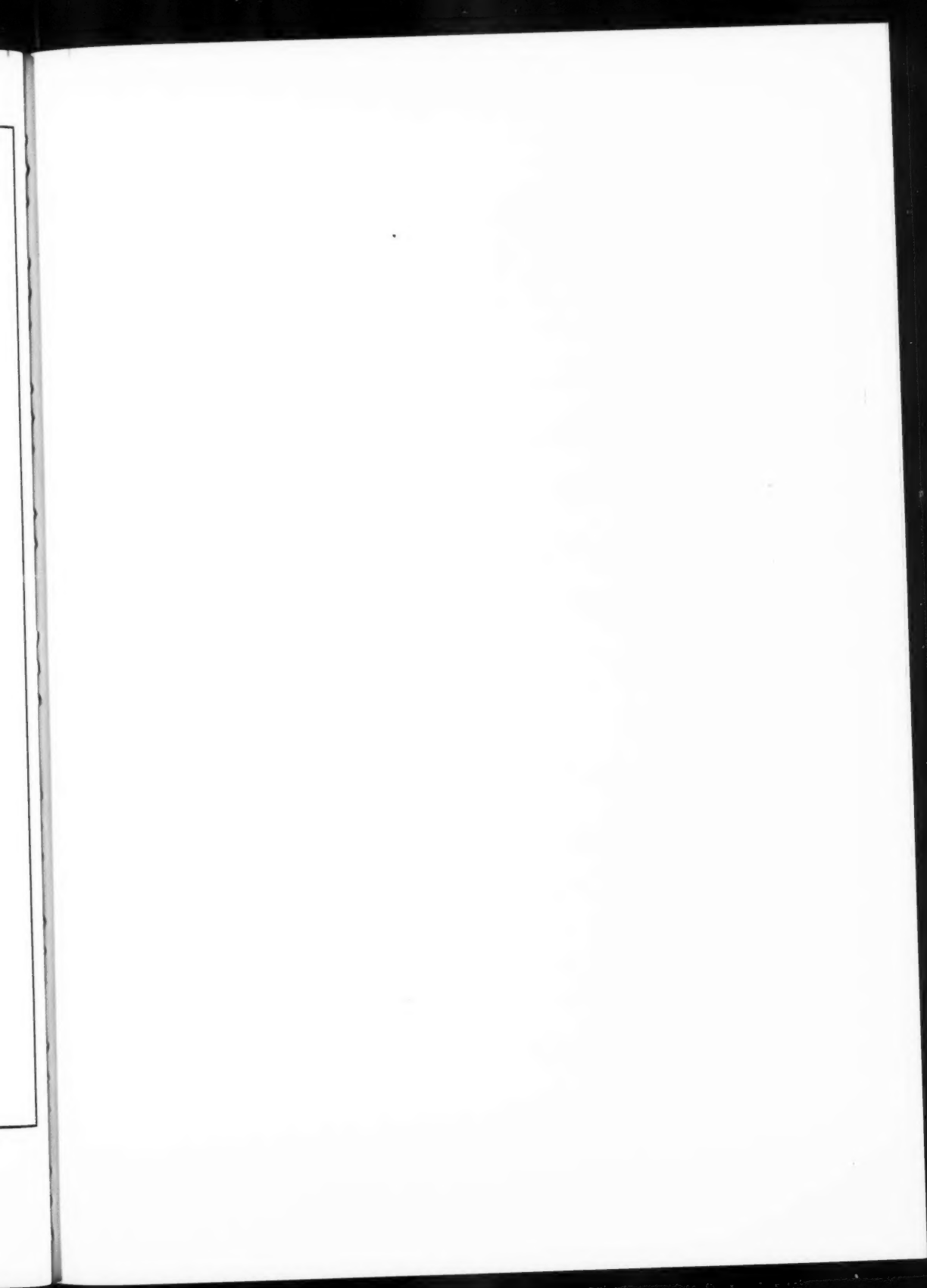
***Ottawa, October      Montreal, December      Toronto, February***

## ***Reproductions***

**Colour reproductions in various sizes are available of many of the paintings in the National Collection**

**Films, slides, lectures and other educational material also available  
Information on request to the Director**

**THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA  
OTTAWA**





AN  
SP  
H  
AN  
W

ill  
th  
w  
F  
b

b  
P  
il

a  
C

h

Y  
V

# An Illustrator Speaks His Mind

AN INTERVIEW  
WITH OSCAR CAHÉN

*Opposite: Illustration by  
Oscar Cahén for "The  
Harvard Murder Case"*

*For New Liberty*



Oscar Cahén devotes himself almost entirely in his commercial work to magazine illustration, as he believes there is a greater opportunity there for artistic expression than in the average advertising art commission. In order to have as much time as possible for painting, which is his main occupation, he is now living with his wife and five-year-old son at Fogwood Farm near King, Ontario, where he finds he has lower living costs and greater freedom than he would have if working in a cramped city studio.

He was born in Denmark 35 years ago; studied in various European art academies; then before going to England in 1938 he taught illustration and design at the Rotter School in Prague. A Canadian citizen since 1946, Cahén, or "Oscar" as he always signs himself in his illustrations, came to this country in 1940 from England.

His paintings have been shown in various exhibitions in Canada and one of his most ambitious recent works, entitled *Adoration*, was included in this year's Exhibition of Contemporary Canadian Arts in Toronto.

Recently Canadian Art asked Cahén to give his point of view on illustration in Canada; this he has consented to do by way of an interview with one of the editors, Donald W. Buchanan.

BUCHANAN: You have been in Canada, Oscar, you tell me for ten years. From the amount of your work I see in popular magazines and weeklies, I should say that you have been able

to adjust your talents as an illustrator successfully to Canadian commercial requirements. How is it then that you have been able to remain so independent in style? After all, most



OSCAR CAHÉN. Sketch from "A letter from Paris". For *Playtime* magazine.

Art Director: Dick Hersey

of your work is directly opposed to the prevailing tendency in Canadian publications,—I mean the tendency to imitate the more slick and less subtle *clichés* of illustration technique found in the common run of American magazines.

OSCAR: Well, it wasn't easy at first to find where my work would fit in here. But fortunately art directors, like artists, aren't by any means all alike, and one or two of them, such as Dick Hersey of the *Montreal Standard* and Gene Aliman, who, before becoming art director of *Maclean's*, was art director of *New Liberty*, from the first have been willing to allow me considerable independence of expression. I do admit, however, that too many of our Canadian art directors are awed by the word "American". It is very unfortunate that some of them persist in buying third and fourth rate American illustrations, simply because they come from across the border, instead of using Canadian talent.

BUCHANAN: But isn't this because we don't have many professional illustrators in Canada?

OSCAR: That, of course, depends on how you define the term. As sometimes used at present the words "commercial artist" and

"illustrator" can be dubious titles. It is a sad but true fact that far too many people are occupied in doing commercial art without having any talent except a certain acquired technical "know-how". As a result, the trade of illustrator is often looked down upon by "fine artists", which is regrettable. After all, great artists of the past have worked in this field, Daumier, Doré and Toulouse-Lautrec, for example, and in our days both Chagall and Rouault have illustrated religious themes and classic fiction. Closer to home, in the United States, we find artists of stature such as David Stone-Martin and Rico Lebrun successful in this field.

BUCHANAN: Yet, don't most contemporary illustrators have to make too many concessions to what are, after all, purely literary or even commercial requirements, and doesn't this detract from the quality of their art?

OSCAR: Not necessarily. Creative illustration combines fine artistic values with literary and realistic interpretations. I believe that the average reader of magazines is accessible to those fundamental emotions which are expressed in good art work. Those illustrations which Rouault has done in his famous series of etch-



OSCAR CAHÉN

*Illustration for  
a story on Jazz*

*For The Standard*





OSCAR CAHÉN

*Detail from illustration  
for "Peace of Soul"  
by Fulton Sheen*

*For New Liberty*

ings, *Miserere*, are, I am sure, fully comprehensible to the average person. I do not, of course, expect a magazine like *Maclean's*, for example, to employ Rouault or Chagall, but many of our own recognized artists would turn out a fine job in this field if only given the chance.

BUCHANAN: I grant what you say about Rouault, but surely the themes he depicts are worlds removed from the topics of glamour and romance and the "who-dun-it" fiction which is the common stock of all popular magazines.

OSCAR: Yes, much of the material we are asked to illustrate is of inferior quality. Yet, good art work can be used with it and by itself will do much to raise the standard of the publication in question and stimulate the minds of its more alert readers. Even sex, a much wanted commodity in illustration these days, can be dished out in a very acceptable form if given to qualified artists to handle.

BUCHANAN: You mean in the way Charles Dana Gibson depicted his famous beauties at the turn of the century.

OSCAR: Yes, his work is still remembered and revived in books and magazines today. As for myself, when it comes to drawing girls, I like to depict teen-age types best. However, generally speaking, I much prefer doing illustrations with atmospheric or dramatic possibilities.

BUCHANAN: You would say that it is the job of the illustrator to raise standards of taste and culture in the arts.

OSCAR: Yes, he should be able to do so. Commercial artists need to take more time to reflect upon this power which is at their command. Whether it is a design for an advertisement selling cigarettes, or an illustration for one of Tolstoy's works, ridiculous as the comparison may seem, the accompanying illustration should carry a value of its own. If the feeling for honest interpretation is kept in mind and achieved, the illustration will have done its bit to raise the standards.

BUCHANAN: You mean the illustrator can

take the lead, and not be dependent always on the writer?

OSCAR: Well, cases vary. Sometimes you can get too close to the meaning of the writer and then get in trouble with a libel suit as I once did. On the other hand, if you are really fortunate, you can sometimes give the lead to the writer and let him follow you.

BUCHANAN: For example?

OSCAR: Once, while talking to Dick Hersey, art director of the *Montreal Standard*, I happened to mention that I would like to illustrate something with a backstage atmosphere. Dick suggested that since no such story was in the offing, I should go ahead anyway and do an illustration the way I liked, and he would get the story written afterwards. As it happened, this worked out very well. Day Russell, the writer, who produced this first story, has since turned out several more inspired by drawings of mine which I do during slack periods, and, no matter what situation I chose, he has so far always succeeded in making coherent stories out of them. However, I intend to boil one out one of these days that will stump him.

BUCHANAN: And the libel suit?

OSCAR: About two years ago I was commissioned by *New Liberty* to illustrate an article dealing with conditions in the child welfare administration in the province of Alberta. The article turned out to be controversial, and the writer and editors were later faced with a libel suit.

BUCHANAN: But how did you yourself get mixed up in that?

OSCAR: Quite by accident. In one of the illustrations I did for it, the only data I had had to follow was that contained in the article itself. Thus, following my imagination, I portrayed in one of the drawings a stout gentleman who was supposed to represent, rather vaguely, someone in official capacity in welfare work. As it happened, the actual official in question did look like my drawing, and this became one of the items in the libel suit. The whole affair was afterwards, however, settled

OSCAR CAHÉN

*Detail from illustration  
for "Peace of Soul"  
by Fulton Skeen*

*For New Liberty*



quite peacefully, but as a witness I did get a free flight to Edmonton out of it.

BUCHANAN: But to come back to the artistic details of your work. You seem in general to use different techniques in your illustrations from those you use in your paintings.

OSCAR: Yes, that is true. I do many sketches before starting a painting, but in my illustrations I rarely make such preliminary drawings. In fact, to the dismay of art directors, my "roughs" are usually so sketchy that I can't make them out myself. What I do is to start my finished drawing with a hard pencil right on the board; then I ink in the final design and erase the pencil marks which made up the initial draft. Thus, by eliminating first roughs,

I feel I am able to retain in the completed illustration, the full quality of initial enthusiasm. As for media used, I mix my techniques as subject or purpose dictate, but predominantly I use dyes and casein colours. There are, of course, also a few principles which I carry over from my earlier training in Europe. For example, while a student at the Academy of Art in Dresden, some twenty years ago, I had a Saxon professor who, whenever he looked at my stuff, would exclaim: "Waenicher waehre maehr", approximate translation of which is, "Less would be more". This has become a guiding motto in my commercial drawing. It is not only a truism but it also means less work.

OSCAR CAHÉN. *Illustration for "The Gift of the Magi". For New Liberty*





## Art Schools Aren't Necessarily Evil

JEAN SIMARD

*Design by Jean Simard  
for cover of his book, Félix,  
for Les Editions Variétés, Montreal*

*Jean Simard teaches decorative composition and drawing at the École des Beaux-Arts in Montreal. As "Simi", he is well known for his Christmas cards illustrating Quebec life. A pungent writer, as well as artist, he has published two satires, Félix: Livre d'Enfant pour Adultes, 1947, which was awarded the French Academy's Kormain Prize, and Hotel de la Reine, published last year.*

THE French painter, Fernand Léger, spent most of the war years in New York, teaching art to eager young students and idle old ladies, making them copy wheel-cogs and iron pins—which is one of the hundred ways of learning how to draw! It was during this troubled period that he came to Montreal and delivered a lecture, both attractive and informal, spiced by the raffle of one of his own lithographs and adorned with rather heavy paradoxes, such as: "After six weeks in an art school, a student is able to draw an accurate portrait of his grandmother; this does not prove that he has any talent."

That statement, which shocked many a timorous teacher, let loose, on the other hand, frantic applause. People were wrong, of course, to be offended or overjoyed in such a violent way: because even if it were an evident truth, it was nevertheless very incomplete. The fact of being *incapable*, after six weeks, of making a portrait of one's grandmother does not prove, either, that one is artistically inclined!

This throws a hard light on the complexity of the problem that surrounds the teaching of art nowadays. It is a difficult problem: difficult to set down, difficult to resolve, as it covers

a vast area, a region strewn with traps and pitfalls which has seldom been crossed or flown over in total objectivity without anger, fear, or passion. Such a problem, however, seems to face progressive art teachers all over Canada.

But too many pedagogues, loosely defending precarious academic positions, have shied away from this knotty problem, thick with taboos of all description. Snipers, on the other hand, were constantly harassing official schools—which, oftener than not, were certainly asking for it; for instance, when they were scandalized by Monsieur Léger's jesting, or by the attacks of hostile groups. They refused to understand that criticism is as necessary to the progress of education as a strong opposition is to good government. The schools, like every human endeavour, must be bound to the law of "the survival of the fittest": they must prove themselves worthy of life by sturdy health rather than by the dubious strength of inertia.

Henry Moore, the English sculptor, said: "All the modern talk against art schools is silly. There is no tradition now, so of course every artist must find his own way. But if one



can't even copy from a model, how can one hope to do anything from imagination? . . ."

We stand at the threshold of a new art: a "brave new art" based upon a bold revaluation of our aesthetic concepts; a new "language of vision" adapted to the staccato rhythm of our city life and mechanized civilization. There are no more real boundaries of ready-reckoners to speak of, and each artist is on his own. This does not mean that he should be ignorant of art or technically incompetent. On the contrary, he should be more knowing and skilled than ever, but in order to dominate his craft and soar above it. Indeed, how can one ever create and invent, if one cannot even observe and reproduce? Common sense teaches us that we must know how to walk before ever attempting to dance. A work of art requires as much skill as clock-making; and Degas may very well say—if a trifle maliciously—that "the painting of a picture is as rakish, mischievous and vicious a trick as the perpetration of a crime"!

The technical aspect is, of course, only an extrinsic material condition of art; but it cannot, and should not, be avoided or shunned entirely. We know that the man who *observes* is well below the level of the man who *creates*; but to be capable, some day, of a genuine creation, one must at first have enriched oneself by vigilant observation. What we call imagination is actually a poetic word used to designate memory.

Paul Valéry explains that "to insure the freedom of his drawing, which will express his will, the artist must quell the rebellion of the hand in favour of the eye and imagination; and the poet himself, to phrase his dream, must be perfectly awake". The physical hindrances should be mastered, conquered and left behind, if the artist really wants to be free. There lies the only true liberty: the freedom of the man who *knows*, of the man who has the power to *express* himself; the freedom of the man who has eased his creative abilities by the masterful taming of hand, eye, pencil and colours; the freedom of the man who, by profound and perfectly assimilated knowledge, has won the right to forget laws—or has the capacity to invent new ones.

We all know young people who are afraid

of learning, who fear science will dull their personality. Their art "possesses them, but they do not possess their art", says André Malraux. We ought not to mistrust our intelligence so much: it is not learning that is dangerous, but the failure to *feel* what we learn or to digest it properly, which drives us to mistake the letter for the spirit. Learning, on the contrary, is a magnificent adventure, the very image of what the French call *le beau risque*: the exploration of a forest full of traps, temptations, riddles, enigmas and sorceries, but leading us towards prodigious lands.

Art is often the result of restraint. An epoch which feels strong and healthy loves a struggle and craves obstacles. Gothic sculpture, for instance, would never have the character we so much admire if, instead of hard stone, it had been carved in soap! Victory over material difficulties corresponds, in a way, to the string of a kite: the soar is increased, not abated, by the resistance. . . Art is achieved by overcoming obstacles, leaping over hurdles; and barring a few triflers, the dilemma is no longer to find out if one must or must not learn one's craft, but rather how one should go about it.

In olden times—which were not necessarily *better* but *different*—the future artist lived in the studio of a master, helping him in his work, receiving and treasuring his advice, and hoping one day to equal him or even to excel and surpass him, by an improvement of his "manner"—or in rebellion against it! Thus he grew, in the course of a tradition, under a single influence, knowing hardly anything of what was going on elsewhere—unless he undertook perilous travels to some distant land. Very different from his sedentary ancestor, the young contemporary artist is remarkably well informed: in fact, as never before. There are hardly any aspects of artistic life, however remote in time or space, with which he is not conversant, at least with the aid of pictures. Aztec or Tibetan art are as easy of access to him as the art of his own country. He has at his service, besides the relative facilities of travel, the richly diversified treasure of the museums, the great number of exhibitions, the wonders of photography, the abundance of art books, of colour reproductions and documentary films. He may peruse at will what André

Malraux so aptly calls "the museum without walls". Consequently, his aesthetic culture is infinitely wider and more varied than that of his predecessor. But we may well ask: Is it as deep?

There is always, nowadays—inseparable from these advantages and teamed with a kind of disguised contempt towards concrete knowledge—the omnipresent danger of amateurism, the scattering of one's abilities, the superficiality of one's curiosity and purpose. The exaggerated enjoyment of the work of others may thus sometimes prevent, or slow down, the obstinate elaboration of one's own work. So, the young artist—quartered between the two poles of his technical ignorance and his iconographic erudition—is more able to relish than to bring into being, to understand than to create. Heedlessness or debility of means of expression may become a dangerous impediment, a discouraging stumbling-block. If there is a time, indeed, for meditation, inventiveness and discovery, there is also one for creation in concrete form. Art is all vital spirit, but it must, one day, take material shape or form expressed on canvas, be set upon the stage or tuned for the orchestra.

And then, technical skill becomes indispensable, unavoidable.

So, why fear, or distrust it? It is simply a question of putting skill in its place, which is that of a good servant, of a useful tool. Rembrandt was no less a genius for having mastered so thoroughly all the possibilities of aquafortis.

In other respects, the young artist—while making sure he has his tools well in hand—will have to foresee the moment when he shall free himself and sail under his own power. Thus the apprentice of old had to liberate himself from the master's influence. In both instances, we may call the impotence to do so: "academism". The pages of the history of art and the walls of museums are cluttered with these mediocre craftsmen's dismal works: pale reflections of more powerful inventions, faint echoes of great voices. . . From Cimabue to Picasso, every creator worthy of the title has been surrounded by such dull followers.

Even if one has the chance, nowadays, to know intimately a truly great artist—a master

—very seldom does one study with him only. This belongs to bygone times; and, whatever you do, "influences" will be numerous. Our own Montreal painter, Stanley Cosgrove, worked for a while with the Mexican mural painter, José Clemente Orozco. But before, he had studied in art schools, had worked with other artists. Thus, it was less as an "apprentice" that he came to Orozco than as a young painter eager to profit from the friendly wisdom of an elder, and share in his experiments. Therefore, he worked *with* him rather than *under* him! Two little words characteristic, in our opinion, of two kinds of teachers—and two ways of teaching.

On the one hand, let us try to conjure up the picture of the "positive teacher". We fancy him not as an old-fashioned professor but as a modern instructor: first an artist, then a pedagogue. A dedicated man, he works *with* his pupils, knowing that he is not there to discipline them, but to help and guide them on the difficult path of artistic fulfilment. No less eager than they are, he keeps hammering at new problems, searching for new solutions, always sharing his discoveries. He gives his pupils every advantage derived from his superior knowledge, his feeling for art, his experience, and his wisdom. He is not easily satisfied: he demands, at all time, the utmost of their abilities. He has a great respect for talent, and an even greater one for work: knowing full well that intensive work, to be sure, cannot take the place of talent, but that without work, talent would be of no avail. A dynamic personality, he is gifted with a contagious enthusiasm. He is alive, and thus, an "awakener". He makes a clean sweep, he moulds, and he enriches: he is a prism, not just a mirror.

On the other hand, there is the "negative teacher", whose timorous precepts consist in dead recipes, methods and formulas, yearly repeated in drowsy classrooms. This static professor—this "school-teacher"!—really does not care any more for his students' welfare than he does for the dull subject he pretends to be teaching: he worries about his salary, his job, his retirement. . . Therefore, it is no exaggeration to state that his sorry pupils work *under* him, so heavy the weight of this twaddler's sluggishness.

The birth of the first art schools dates back to the seventeenth century: the brothers Carracci, in Italy, and Monsieur Le Brun, in France, founded and operated the first "academies", with varied results—generally bad!

Since then, art schools have flourished all over the world, subject to praise or scorn, useful or noxious—formative or besotting—stimulating or soporiferous.

It is our firm contention that the efficiency of every school may be measured by the quality of its staff. Indeed, a school is essentially a group of educators working as a team: diversified in their tendencies, but united in their purpose; varying in their views, but working under a common impulse; able, as Robert Hutchins says, "to think importantly alone, but also to talk wisely together" never "confusing science with information, ideas with facts, and knowledge with miscellaneous data"; a picture of unity of intention found in a variety of means; or, so to speak, of harmony wrung out of dissonance.

This group of men—worthy, or unworthy, of the proud title of "educator"—vouch for the excellence or mediocrity of the school.

We should never forget, moreover, that an artist is *born*, never *made*. The school should guide uneasy steps, mould judgment, sharpen understanding, refine taste and disclose the multiple resources of techniques, but should never produce talent artificially. You can teach a craft; art, you can but recommend. The art school aims at increasing and improving innate qualities, not at producing "objets d'art". Its instructors are "thinking masters", not manufacturers. . . . If one desires to embark upon the adventurous journey of learning, the schools will show the way, offer road-maps, a compass and provisional maintenance; but the traveller will have to follow a lonely and deserted road.

And let us finally admit, with Immanuel Kant, "that we can only attend to those pupils who are of middle ability; that the dunces are beyond help; and the geniuses will help themselves. . . ."

Art schools as such have often been called arbitrary, tyrannical, disrespectful of personalities—in a word, "academic". Indeed, they have often been just that! Because it is easier

to command than to explain or to convince. . . . But to go about clamouring that *all* art schools follow this pattern is a no less dangerous easy and summary academism: the "academism-of-being-suspicious-of-academism", which resembles the prejudice of being afraid of prejudices, and which might make us prisoners of influences . . . for fear of influences! It has become standard practice for critics to attack art schools, or for former pupils to disown them: a fad, a ready-made opinion. And they repeat—with exactly the same words and the same vocabulary of invectives—the old accusations formerly uttered against certain forms of official European teaching. But this is America! . . . And there is a world of difference between the rusty Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris at the beginning of the century, and the very progressive Institute of Design in Chicago, which has inherited the bold conceptions of the Bauhaus in Germany.

Furthermore, art schools are generally judged by very fallacious criteria: for instance, by the annual exhibitions of students' works. Too often do we forget they are just this: students' work—and not the finished works of experienced artists. They are the efforts of apprentices, engrossed in the learning of their craft, and should therefore be judged merely as essays, still imperfect solutions to elementary problems, rudimentary stages of unfinished experiments corresponding to art as grammar does to literature.

Then there is the former student's strange but frequent behaviour: it has often been noted, perhaps with a tinge of cynicism, that the most talented is often the one to disown his alma mater, while the duller specimen has a way of clinging to her skirts! The former, with the darkest ingratitude, does exactly what the school expected of him: he breaks away and frees himself from the formal bonds, showing the very quality of individualism which is so sadly lacking in the latter.

To sum up the facts in a free paraphrase of Spinoza's ideas on the State, let us persist in believing that the real end of the "school-as-it-should-be" is not to dominate and restrain the students by a hard discipline, to transform rational beings into submissive

brutes or machines; on the contrary, its very purpose is to free them from the anguish and slowness of solitary research so that they may live and work in the security of a propitious atmosphere, of a "climate" highly favourable to the complete development of their faculties and the ultimate blossoming of their talent.

It should offer them the treasures of learning, the advantages of rich and varied lessons,

of a real moulding of character. It should invite them to share in an abundance of collective research and experiment. It should lead them to live by the exercise of their free reason. In short, it should free them from hindrances of every sort in order to canalize their strength and to bring all their possibilities into full bloom. Thus shall the art school prove itself a worthy organism,—its object *liberty*.

JEAN SIMARD

*"Les deux frères"*  
One of a series  
of designs  
for a set of  
Christmas cards  
published by  
Production Lacia,  
Quebec



# Good Lettering — An Art to be Taught

SYDNEY H. WATSON

THE art of lettering in the middle of the twentieth century has become one of the world's major industries. One has only to walk down the main street of any town and one literally can't see the sky for letters, good and bad, and I am afraid mostly bad. It has become such a problem that the city fathers of one of our most respectable Canadian cities have discussed the possibility of banning the use of over-head signs on this community's main street. In some ways this may appear to be a rather wholesome idea—for the cause of good lettering at least—if not altogether for the sign companies involved.

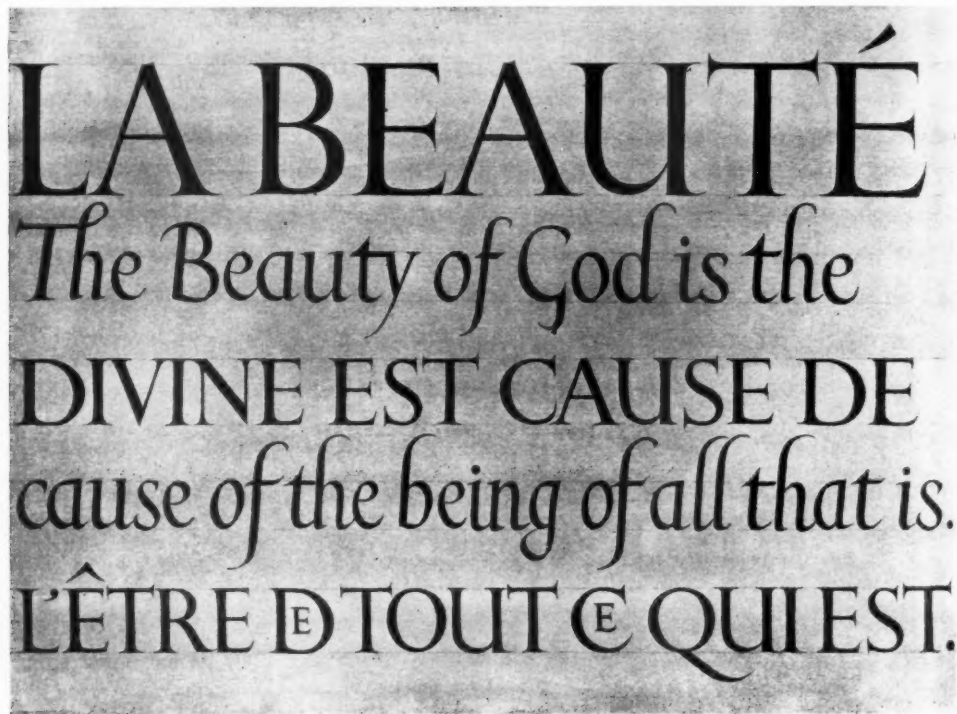
When one sits at home on a quiet Sunday afternoon, and lazily thumbs through page after page of the Sunday paper, or *Life* or *Time* or a thousand and one other periodicals, one must grow tired, as I do often, just

contemplating the number of man hours invested in the art of lettering alone. The skill and care, and respect for tradition that one finds, possibly in a sub-heading in a small advertisement on one page, as compared to the complete disregard for the rules in the lettering that one finds in a large, full colour advertisement opposite (usually advertising soap flakes), never ceases to amaze me.

To the uninitiated, the whole business of lettering too often comes under the vaguely inaccurate term of "printing". This is regrettable. For although lettering and printing are interdependent to the extent that the designing of letters leads to and is the basis of the designing of type, the two should never be confused. Type is the product of metal cutting or engraving, lettering the product of the pen, pencil or brush.

*Wooden panel with words from St. Thomas Aquinas (French and English translations) painted by Eric Gill*

*Courtesy: Victoria and Albert Museum*



LA BEAUTÉ  
The Beauty of God is the  
DIVINE EST CAUSE DE  
cause of the being of all that is.  
L'ÊTRE ET TOUT CE QUI EST.



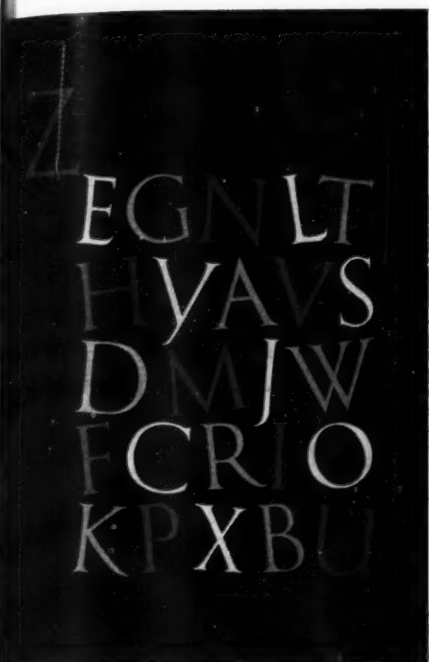
s in-  
skill  
one  
small  
ed to  
the  
colour  
ising  
  
ss of  
trugly  
gret-  
g are  
sign-  
of the  
er be  
tting  
the

nted  
useum

S.  
T.

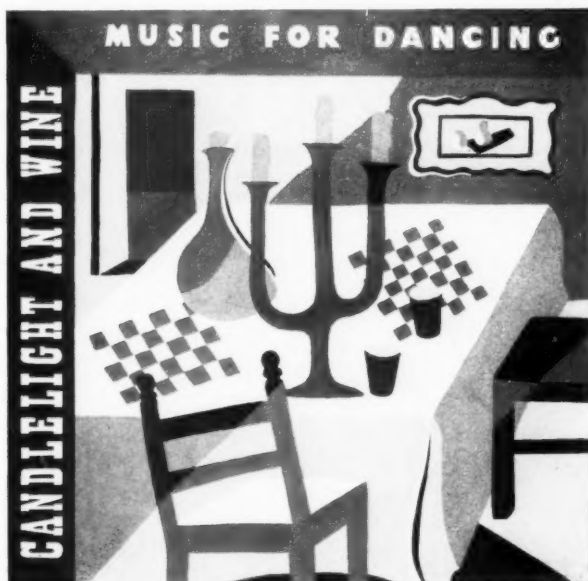
In the teaching of calligraphy and lettering, in which I have had some experience, I have always, as an introduction to the subject, stressed the importance of the tools to be used. If you are creating a pen-type form of letter you use a pen. If you are building a brush letter, you use a brush, and you must never make an imitation. That, of course, is a basic rule applying to any form of plastic art. A transparent water colour is not supposed to have the opacity of an oil, nor a clay model the chiselled texture of a stone carving. This simple precept, this elementary dogma, if properly understood, would save many art students much unnecessary grief.

Lesson number two is that, as a student, you do not invent a new "A", you accept the one already made. This is sometimes difficult for a student to realize. It is only after intensive study and observance that this point is appreciated. When the historical background of our alphabet is unfolded, when some knowledge of its slow evolution is given, only then does the young student obtain that proper humility which will enable him to produce a page of fine lettering. Then, in practice, he will often find that, although he has religiously followed the letters laid down before him, his are not quite the same; his are in some strange way his own. These new letters may even be better than the ones laid down. But regardless of whether they are



*Composition in lettering by student of Sydney J. Watson at the Ontario College of Art*

*Design, incorporating lettering, for the cover of a record album by a student at the Ontario College of Art*





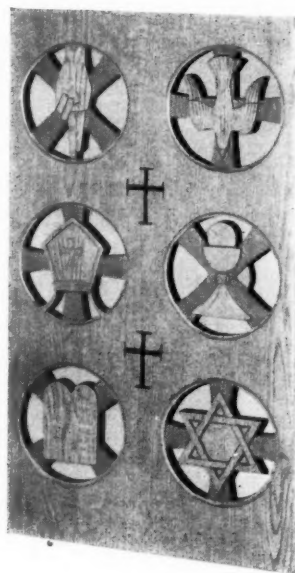
*A brush form exercise by a third year student of Sydney H. Watson at the Ontario College of Art. Below: Two details from lesson desk designed by Sydney H. Watson for the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto*

good or bad, he will see some reflection of himself in them, no matter how hard he attempted to make a faithful copy.

I try to keep in front of my students constantly a very carefully edited collection of alphabets of a reasonable size, so that all the subtle characteristics of the letters are visible. These are in handy book form and are on their drawing boards throughout their assignment. When the book is not in evidence, one can expect trouble. I have found it almost impossible, perhaps because of scale, for the student to grasp the form of a new letter from a blackboard copy, regardless of how much care I have taken in its rendering. To reduce a letter from two feet high to one half-inch is an almost impossible job for a beginner.

In most cases, style without readability is to be condemned. Except, perhaps, in trademarks and similar devices where the over-all design itself may be the distinguishing feature, and the readability secondary, legibility in lettering is the number one priority. I lay down only a few rules for my students in this order: 1. Readability, 2. Style, 3. Craftsmanship, that is the good workmanship and precision which comes with experience. To build up with a student, first of all, a conscientiousness that lettering does exist apart from type, that it just isn't all "printing" and that there are as many different styles as there are stars in the heavens, is a task which requires patience and forbearance.

It is my practice to have a student begin working with the round-pointed lettering pen. He does first a plain contemporary Gothic form of capital, followed by the small letters



of the same form. This seems to make him very much aware of spacing, without any of the "fillers" one sometimes finds in more elaborate letters. This is followed by exercises with a flat lettering pen, using the Roman letter in capitals, followed by the small letters. As a special treat, the students are then given the uncial form, which is perhaps the easiest of all to do, but the most rewarding form, perhaps, from an aesthetic point of view. Up to this point they have been writing letters. Now they begin building them with drafting instruments—a rather tiresome task, but a very necessary one. By the end of their course, they have had experience with the calligraphic letter, the instrument-built letter, and the free-brush letter in many of its traditional forms. Some of the illustrations here show how an appreciation for lettering in the field of contemporary design has been developed among students at the Ontario College of Art.

I sometimes feel that a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Lettering should be established. I have tried briefly at the beginning to cite some abuses and misuses, as I see them. Considering that all of us as readers are

confronted with a constant deluge of the printed word, a greater knowledge of the principles of lettering and typography should exist, at least among all those who make professional use of this commodity,—advertisers, architects, interior decorators, industrial designers, sculptors and painters. Such persons, once they set their minds to it, could do an immense job to improve the visual appearance of our language.

I am not, however, really pessimistic about the state of lettering and typography in the contemporary world. There has been some improvement since the end of the nineteenth century. Although that century specialized in turning out fine editions of books, I am quite sure most critics would agree that much of the typography of that period was not always in the best tradition. During recent decades, beginning perhaps with Edward Johnston in England, there has been a renaissance in the art of lettering. Such names as Weiss and Koch on the Continent are synonymous with good design of the kind. More recently there has been Eric Gill in Great Britain and Oscar Ogg in the United States.

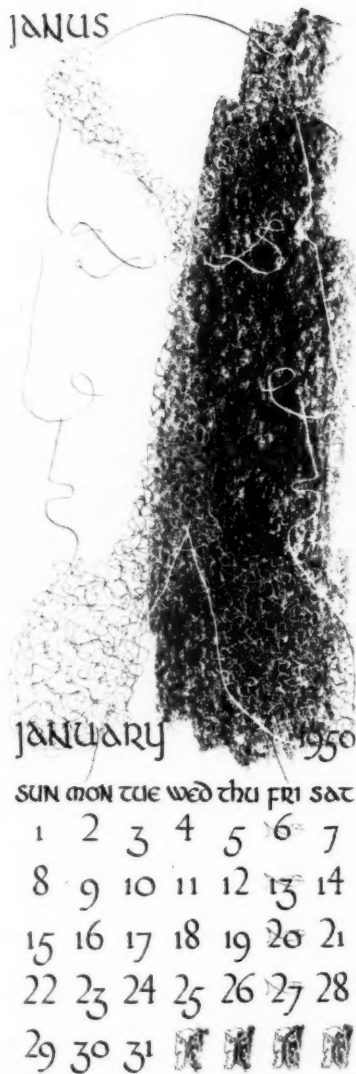
*Before going on to designs which combine both lettering and illustrative material, students at the Ontario College of Art are given exercises such as these shown below. Left: Based on studies of architectural and archeological history. Right: Based on the use of lettering alone.*



Ogg has done more to enhance the American book-jacket than any other American designer. With the exception of the work of certain misguided gentlemen, who in the early thirties under the label of the "New Art" broke with tradition and made "O's" out of solid circles and "B's" out of two solid circles with a flat left side, the state of this profession is brighter than it has been for a long time.

I feel, however, that more could be done in our schools. Lettering should be on the timetable of every art and architectural student—not simply for one year, but throughout his whole course. Lettering is somewhat like olives, a taste for it has to be developed over a period of time. If this taste were developed, how much better some of our murals would look, if as much care had been given to the inscription as to the painting. How much more satisfying some of our new store fronts would be if the architect or industrial designer had always known the difference between good and bad lettering. I can think of more than one monument reduced to mediocrity by a poor inscription. Possibly the least of the offenders in this regard, considering the amount of this commodity they purchase, are those larger companies who advertise on a national scale. Local firms on the contrary, who cannot afford the facilities of the more highly trained art staffs of the national advertising agencies, do not fare so well.

I do believe, however, that the average layman has a keener appreciation of lettering than most designers would care to admit. It is not necessary to have an extensive knowledge of musical theory to be thrilled by a Beethoven sonata, nor need a layman understand the technique of fine lettering to appreciate the beautifully round "O" in a Weiss letter, a Roman capital "R" by Gill, a missal page by a twelfth century monk, or a smooth flowing line of contemporary script. He may not know how a good letter is really made, but he will know when there is bad "colour" in a line or when an "S" is falling over: such defects will offend his "musical sense". So it behoves us as designers or educators to see that these "things" called letters, which we create, shall always be things of beauty and usefulness.



*Calendar design by second year student of  
Sydney H. Watson at the Ontario College  
of Art, Toronto*

# Are You Satisfied with the Furniture You Buy?

## A REPORT ON THE DESIGNING OF CANADIAN FURNITURE

THE long 'Dark Ages' of the furniture industry in Canada—and elsewhere—may now be over but they are not forgotten", recently declared the editor of the *Montreal Daily Star*, in commenting on the survey of design conditions in the Canadian furniture industry as published this July by the National Industrial Design Committee. "Beautiful native woods were ruined", he went on to say of earlier styles, "by tortuous design with the aid of turning-lathe, gouge, chisel and fret-saw and, in the 'finest' pieces, a little dab of gilt paint here and there. Made with the durability of the pyramids, these things could not be worn out and were seldom thrown out inside two or three generations. They were endured, in the hope of better days."

That better days may now have dawned is possible. Yet there is still considerable room for improvement in Canadian furniture manufacturing, according to John H. Low-Beer of Granby, P.Q. and James E. Ferguson of London, Ontario, the two experts who drew up this report for the National Industrial Design Committee. They interviewed 139 manufacturers and a number of key retailers and visited dozens of furniture-making centres in Ontario and Quebec.

of  
ege  
Their report concludes: "... within recent years there has been a growing appreciation of and demand for furniture possessing higher standards of design; also a keener interest is being taken by consumers in the complete decoration and furnishing of a room or house. The younger buyers are generally interested in modern furniture, although a liking for traditional styles is still evident among many buyers in this class. . . . Many of the retailers, however, feel that the manufacturer waits too long until the customer demand for an existing design has been exhausted before going on to develop and produce new ones; they add that he thus forces retailers to buy whatever is obtainable in new designs from the United States. This opinion of the retailer, however, perhaps has been formed without sufficient

reflection on his part as to the economic limitations of the Canadian market and of the resulting risks, out of all proportion to their possible returns, which manufacturers must undergo when they pioneer in new fields of design."

Yet, the furniture industry is far from being on an insecure basis in Canada. It enjoys considerable tariff protection. Many of the larger firms have been established for generations. On the whole, the industry has been prosperous and expanding, as can be seen when one reads that its annual output for 1948 was valued at over one hundred million dollars.

In the nineteenth century the industry was centred in south-western Ontario, for in that section there were, as the report explains, "Excellent lumber resources to which was added the skill of hard-working German immigrants, who were qualified cabinet-makers. . . ." Today some 13 firms are still in existence in Ontario "which were founded fifty years or more ago, and . . . of these firms, seven are still controlled by the families which established them."

"Early in this century," the report adds, "the industry entered upon its first considerable development in the province of Quebec. Later, between the two wars, there was a very rapid growth in furniture manufacturing in Quebec. The economic reasons behind this were mainly more favourable labour rates, longer working hours and fresh lumber resources. As the cheapness and abundance of labour provided the principal impetus towards the growth of the industry in Quebec, they also today give a particular character to furniture making in that province. Historically, Ontario began to produce furniture by using experienced craftsmen and skilled cabinet-makers; this results today in a much larger proportion of higher quality furniture being made in Ontario than elsewhere in Canada. Quebec, on the contrary, makes a much higher proportion of low-priced merchandise than does Ontario."

*An example of an original United States design licensed for production in Canada, this desk was made by an Ontario manufacturer for the T. Eaton Co. Ltd., Toronto*



*An original Canadian design, this chair is made of Canadian birch with foam rubber cushions. Designed by Donald S. Strudley, for Imperial Rattan, Ltd., Stratford, Ontario*



While there is much of economic interest in the survey, the main body of it is devoted to comments on design. The following quotations from the report, to which we have added brief introductory phrases in italics, will serve to bring out the essence of the findings.

*Often there is variety, for the mere sake of variety, so that each season merchants will have something new to sell.* "Manufacturers of bedroom suites and novelty items change their designs continually in normal times, so as to provide retailers with continual variety in these lines of products. This does not mean that the designs are basically changed; this would be an impossibility, particularly when one considers that in manufacturing novelties, firms often vary patterns up to fifty times a year and firms making bedroom suites often effect similar changes about twelve times yearly. What is involved here are mainly minor variations such as providing new drawer pulls and leg bases, or adding different ornamental patterns and mouldings while retaining the original structural shape of the article. On the other hand, producers of kitchen and low-priced utility chairs have not found it necessary to make any radical changes in design for the past fifty years."

*Regional tastes still persist.* "In former years certain special types and styles of furniture were made for sale in certain districts of Canada, but, while there are still some regional

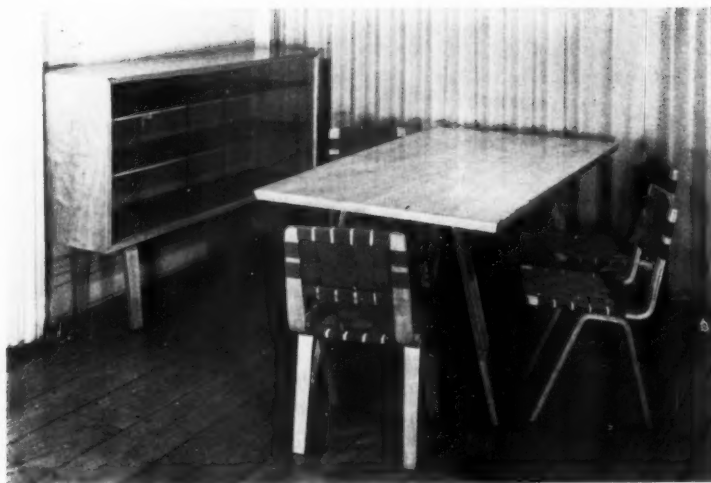
preferences, they are no longer as important as formerly. Some district preferences are: (a) Solid red maple sells far better in Ontario, Western Canada and in the large cities than it does in Quebec; (b) The Maritimes show a preference for the traditional types in mahogany; (c) Modern furniture is mainly sold in the larger urban centres of Ontario, Quebec and Western Canada; (d) Heavily patterned, darkly coloured upholstered living-room suites are preferred in the province of Quebec.

"These preferences relate partly to the characteristics of certain districts and partly to differences in house architecture. The majority of modern homes in the contemporary style now being built are to be found in British Columbia. In the East, low-priced modern houses do not exist to any great extent. Therefore the sale of more modern furniture has only begun to be popular within the past two or three years and initial experiments in handling it have often proved exceptionally disappointing to enterprising producers and retailers. We find, however, that in the past two years a decided change has been taking place in the larger cities. For example, one of the retailers interviewed in Montreal pointed out that an inexpensive well-designed modern bedroom set of the unfinished type which had to be painted or varnished afterwards by the buyer was outselling most other similar lines, which does appear to show a trend in taste."

*Some typical examples of Canadian made chairs. Left: A direct adaptation from a contemporary American design. Centre: A traditional type but with little care given to design. Right: An attempt to develop in Quebec a "Laurentian" or rustic style.*







*A group exercise by students of the Ryerson Institute of Technology, Toronto. Birch plywood has been used with laminated legs*

*There is a lack of fully qualified designers in the industry.* "Only a few companies, usually only the larger firms or some smaller ones, which do contract work, employ full-time designers. Of all the firms interviewed only 18 used full-time designers, while 36 used part-time designers. There are many firms where the owner, manager or some other official does the designing when required."

*Dependence on American designs is obvious.* "In the development of designs it has been the practice of many firms to follow, as closely as it is possible to do so in their particular business, the styles produced by furniture manufacturers in the United States. The majority of factories state that American designing trends exert a great influence on Canadian production. Only 18 factories stated they were not influenced by American designs while only 15 reported that the influence was slight or moderate; this leaves 106 firms which acknowledged that they were definitely influenced by American designs. Many manufacturers visit the large furniture trade exhibitions held in the United States, they purchase samples there and reproduce them in Canada, either exactly or with slight modifications in the design." And it is the public which helps to consolidate and perpetuate this trend towards copying.

"National advertising of furniture in the United States is much greater now than formerly and the magazines and other periodicals carrying these advertisements are widely read

in Canada. These advertisements are closely studied as are also the articles which appear in these publications on how to furnish homes. These magazines are even carried to the stores by consumers when selections for purchases are being made. From this practice, there arises certain unfair criticism of the furniture industry in Canada; this is because some people expect to find among the comparatively limited production of furniture in Canada, all the variety of styles as illustrated in the United States periodicals."

*Manufacturers are slowly beginning to think in terms of simpler designs.* Concerning present possibilities there is room for some optimism. "The replies to the question 'Do you feel that a re-design of your product would help sales?' showed generally that the manufacturers were aware of such a need. They had now gone through a fairly long period during which changes, as in the war years, had been prohibited, materials had been hard to get, and the competitive pressure of the market had been lessened because of consistent consumer demand for available stocks of furniture. These conditions, however, were no longer present in such force. Most manufacturers accordingly agreed the time had come when the preparation of new designs should be seriously considered; already many were actively engaged in making such changes." And one influence which has important bearing today, the report adds else-

where, is that of changing conditions in housing.

"At the beginning of the century, when large homes were being built and space in them was unlimited and domestic help also plentiful, rooms tended to be filled with dark, heavy, ornamented furniture. Today, with smaller homes being built and the servant problem acute, also with architects working out plans for space saving devices in the home, it is natural to find furniture growing lighter, more compact and simpler."

What remains to be solved is the training and use of better qualified designers in the industry, and of this the writers have more than a few recommendations to give. The gist of them, however, is contained in the following paragraphs:

"The training of designers could be furthered through scholarships, which would allow Canadians to attend some of the internationally recognized schools of design in the United States, or by adding complete and improved design courses to those already to be found in some Canadian schools. As the number of designers required by the furniture industry is not sufficiently large to justify the setting up of a specialized furniture design school—for example, the industry in Ontario feels that only about two full-time designers could be absorbed by it each year for the next five years—consideration should be given to the expansion or amalgamation of the existing schools or classes. In Ontario there are two such, the School of Design in the Ontario College of Art and the Ryerson Institute of Technology, both in Toronto, while in the province of Quebec, there is L'Ecole du Meuble in Montreal. . .

"There cannot be any doubt that the above schools are at present the most suitable institutions available in Canada for the education

of furniture designers. Through the broadening of the subjects they teach, through more practical contacts with the industry and perhaps through the appointment of more internationally qualified specialists as teachers, the standard of designing in Canada could definitely be raised and the value of these schools to the furniture industry greatly increased. . .

"In order to create a greater interest in the use of Canadian designers amongst manufacturers, some form of design competition might be effective. One method would be to have the National Industrial Design Committee, in co-operation with Canadian furniture manufacturers, hold such a competition and have the winning designs made as prototypes and shown at the International Trade Fair in Toronto, or at the Furniture and Furnishings Trade show, also in Toronto."

*Stages in the development of a Canadian design for a laminated plywood chair as described in the film-strip, Better Designs in Canadian Products, now available from the National Gallery of Canada. Designs by W. Czerwinski*





Photo: National Film Board

*"... the essentially  
co-operative nature  
of the medium."*

## A Comment on Canadian Films

GUDRUN PARKER

TO SUGGEST that the art of film in Canada concerns itself primarily with the uses to which it can be put will seem, to the sophisticate in any event, something a little unimaginative, a little too virtuous. But there you have it; and to discount its significance would be both hasty and unwise.

Certainly, to whatever extent the development of the motion picture in this country has been nurtured, given root, made to flourish and kept from becoming only a stray and sometime thing, has been due to this very idea of necessity and function. It has meant, through the past ten years, an opportunity for young Canadians to find their way in a new medium, to explore it as a form, to work with it and then to apply their knowledge and creative skills to a programme of information and educational film production. And it is in this field that Canada, cinematically, has achieved her unique position.

How unique a position it is can be attested by the genuine respect and regard accorded our government film production and distribution system by countries the world over. It is, indeed, a model of its kind, and, as such, an object of more study than is perhaps generally realized. In a single week last summer, the National Film Board entertained film representatives from Australia, the Philippines, India, Denmark and Israel, all of whom had come to observe this quite remarkable thing in action, to examine, with frank envy, this achieved relationship between the producer and the user. Many of them found the Board's organization sufficiently worthy to stay with it and study it for the better part of a year.

If I have emphasized utility and stressed the importance of being functional, it is because these factors, certainly, have been the prime movers in Canadian film development. But function alone, some will say, butters no

art, and it would be difficult to quarrel with this observation. But neither does form alone. What brings greatness to any creative work is the effective integration of form and substance and the quality which each of these concepts brings to the other. I would suggest that function assures substance. Form is that aspect of explosive creativity which, imaginatively applied, brings us in the presence of art.

The vengeful purist may well frown and I can hear the line his reasoning would follow. In many ways his argument is to be respected, his attitude of "art in the free," even to be envied. But art, I suspect, is as much a matter of disciplines as of freedoms, and becomes free only once the disciplines are understood and have been mastered. Any function and substance are disciplines. They are not easily served and the result, in films in any case, tends at first to be conventional.

But there are additional disciplines in film making which are perhaps even more demanding than that of function—they are cost of production, and the essentially co-operative nature of the medium. I am not suggesting that

a low budget production is artistically limited. I am sure that Basil Wright's *Song of Ceylon* will endure as a piece of purposeful art long after Mr. Goldwyn's *Samson and Delilah* has been buried in the vaults, and yet Wright's production, in terms of finance, was so modest as to be, by comparison, almost a work of charity. But money is a factor. The demands of budget must ultimately dictate the scope of the production, how the subject will be treated, and how much time can be given to it.

No individual makes a film. It is the result of the efforts, creatively pooled, of many people—directors, writers, cameramen, editors, film composers, sound technicians and scores of others who contribute to the work. Each one helps to shape it, move it along. The writer will indicate the scene. The director will, in turn, bring it to a visual fact, interpret the material in terms of feeling and mood and presentation (at the same time remembering the editor who will have to cope with it at a later time). The cameraman will bring his refinements to the scene, perhaps in the way he lights it, the movements of his camera. The

*Opposite: The director and camera crew for the National Film Board production, Ballet Festival, at work filming a scene from the ballet "Song of David". Below: A scene from the ballet as presented by the Neo Dance Theatre, Toronto.*

*Photo: National Film Board*



very process of shooting will, in a documentary crew, involve perhaps five to ten people, each of them important to the success of the filming. So what we have here, unlike painting, or writing, is a high degree of co-operative achievement in an art. And I am personally persuaded that any film, and the extent to which it reaches its goal, reflects the effectiveness of the working relationship among its makers.

We have learned, here in Canada, the many disciplines of this art, and they have become a healthy part of our background. Where do we then, as film producers so born and bred, stand today? I think we are arriving at a point

where we are beginning to feel at home in the medium. We have learned many of the basic lessons and have made the mistakes that have to be made and that are part of the development. We are a little surer of ourselves and can begin to explore with more confidence, take more chances. We are becoming more conscious of form in the search for expression. With increasing technical skills, we are moving towards longer and more complex films.

I think, in fact, we are only now on the threshold of creative cinema in Canada. I do not mean necessarily, by creative cinema, that we can now go beyond documentary's "drama of the doorstep", although we can do that if we



Photo: National Film Board

"... drama of the doorstep ..."

... idea of  
necessity  
and function."



Two frames from  
the film *Vegetable  
Insects*. Above: Black  
swallow-tail pupa.  
Below: Destruction  
of cabbage leaves  
by insects



Photos: National Film Board

want to. What I do feel is that we can now, among other things in the artistic sense, actually begin to bring more flavour to the facts. This is a matter not only of interpretative minds at work, but also of requiring at the root a certain mastery of film techniques. We have used our cameras perhaps too much as observers of the obvious. There is a constant challenge to interpret more richly, with a clear-sighted camera eye, the developing Canadian scene. We have perhaps not searched sufficiently for those relationships that can reveal the core of a country. We have not

captured enough of the Canadian character in the intimate sense.

This does not mean that we have not done these things at all. Far from it. What then have we done these past ten years? We have made of Canadian documentary a notable achievement in terms of discovering and revealing the images of our country. But we were learning "film" at the same time, and perhaps only now are we properly prepared for the job.

This, then, is the threshold on which we



stand. It is surely to be hoped, at the same time, that, with this growing competence, the Canadian film-maker will not be too much lured into slickness and the slick formula, that the excitement of form will not leave

substance by the wayside, that the documentary movement will continue to retain the spirit and drive and that adventuresome freshness on which, indeed, rests its sturdy reputation the world over.



Photo: National Film Board

*Animator's table showing parts and equipment used in making one type of animation film*

## Yes, Painting might be Better in Toronto

ANDREW BELL

THERE are times when silence is golden, and there are times when saying nothing is the full equal of a spoken lie. Painters in Toronto, on balance, are earnest, diligent, technically competent and talented. They also tend to be exceedingly nice. How much more pleasant it would be then if one decently could hold one's tongue about the present state of Toronto painting! But, in existing circumstances, silence conceivably could add up to a disservice to Canadian art. Little important work is currently coming out of Toronto, and pondering reasons might be useful.

The artistic hey-day in Toronto is now

twenty-five years spent. In 1925 the Group of Seven was pretty much based there, and you had a situation where several artists knew what they wanted to say, and were at great pains to state compulsive truths effectively. These men were certain Canada didn't resemble Europe, and they conceived it to be their artistic duty to cry out these things in original terms. Some now rather scoff at what they think technical inadequacies in the Group contribution. What merit has technique in itself if, in fact, you really have little to say? There was a drive and a purposefulness in those Group paintings which, with a few



men-  
the  
resh-  
epu-

notable exceptions, recent work almost completely lacks.

And whatever scoffing there may be on the question of technique, a harking back to the Group of Seven inheritance none the less constitutes a first cause of the local "malaise". Some of the Group's children, out of admiration for the achievements of their parents, try to repeat these earlier successes. The essay in emulation fails, because the later generation lives in another time, has other aptitudes, or because its convictions lie along different lines. The Group stressed design, infinite simplification, brilliant colour. But it was their sense of hard purpose—that determination to lay bare the anatomy of the Canadian land—quite as much as their original way of seeing that made their canvases important.

Painting in Toronto, speaking generally, is still under the thrall of the Group in that it continues to cleave to emphasis on stylized design and heightened colour. There is a lingering underlining, too of "indigenous Canadian work". The Group were self-consciously Canadian, but for them there was a validity of reason. They were in revolt against the domination of a European artistic tradition, and like other revolutionaries they were entitled to wave a flag. Those circumstances were exceptional. The revolt succeeded, but today this continual seeking after "typically Canadian" subjects seriously harms disinterested work. Painting and propaganda, like alcohol and motor cars, don't mix well.

Artists indeed are not so unlike their lay fellow-countrymen. The work of Canadian painters must inevitably be Canadian, however they will it. To paraphrase a remark of Jacques de Tonnancour "Canadian apples cannot help growing on Canadian trees". But calculated "Canadian" work is a fetter on free expression, and in consequence fails. I do not believe that the creative possibilities in Montreal are any greater than they are in Toronto. Yet, in this respect the artistic philosophy of Montreal is a lot more healthy. Pure art is like pure science. Truth is the quest, and there is no special pleading.

"Purpose" in art and lay language means different things. Purpose in ordinary terms, I

suppose, means getting a job done properly. In art the connotation is the creative expression of a personal truth. Then for the art to have enduring value another element must be added—a reasonable universality of appeal. What recent Toronto work comes within this definition? David Milne, Paraskeva Clark, Jack Nichols—perhaps the work of these three qualify, but what other?

There, in essence, is the tragedy. The majority of Toronto painters are technically adequate but, for reasons quite insufficient to their talents, the thrall of the Group of Seven is still on them, and they lack a clearly defined original purpose of their own. Still lifes, pictures of dead birds, children scampering across the fields: all these are legitimate subjects of art. Yet, unless they are done with freshness and a conviction that "here is something you should know", the result adds up to little more than an appealing doodle.

Perhaps, too, we have a right in this vexatious age to expect special help from the artist. Painters are like receiving stations, and why are we, in Toronto anyhow, getting so little talk from them about the problems of our period? People everywhere in 1950 are uncertain of their values, and out of fear, tend to pull their punches. Yet, with the detachment they have and the way of seeing they alone possess, painters can do much to explain these things and, quite without ulterior motive, point a way. The solution of the problem of how men shall understand each other is the big purpose, even artistically, of the fifties. At parties Toronto painters talk of these matters. Why don't they do so in colour and line?

If I may turn a phrase, there is something rotten about the state of painting in Toronto, and it is of the dead rot kind. But these remarks which are confined only to Toronto, because it is the art centre with which I am most familiar, are entitled, I suspect, to a much wider Canadian application. Most painters in Canada are hard pressed to make a living by their art, and it may well be that this is why we are denied their personal truths. Should we not consider more how we can free them of these economic shackles? We need their disinterested vision, and they should have the chance to reflect and speak of our times.

# Art in Montreal—from Good to Indifferent

ROBERT AYRE

IN THE first six months of this year, more than fifty art exhibitions were held in Montreal, not counting students' displays, photographic salons and Queen Mary's rug. Who would attempt to see them all, scattered as they were over the city and sometimes miles apart? Nobody but the conscientious critic of a daily newspaper. Invited to write a Saturday column for the *Daily Star*, I began making my rounds in January and I wasn't going very long before I learned that conscience is a hard taskmaster unless it is checked by common sense, that Shakespeare was right about the better part of valour. Time, energy, space and overlapping being what they are, it was impossible to cover all the shows; and on top of these considerations there was the more important consideration of value: I had to be selective. Some exhibitions I did not see at all; some I saw several times; others I saw and did not write about. From the standpoint of a serious interest in art, only about half of the shows were worthy of attention. But twenty or twenty-five in six months isn't bad.

The big event of the season was the exhibition, *The Eighteenth Century Art of France and England*, held in the Museum of Fine Arts in the spring. It attracted nearly twenty thousand visitors; not enough, however, to cover all the expense of bringing the treasures to Montreal; and not nearly as many as saw some of the great exhibitions of the past, like the show of old masters held during the war in aid of the merchant seamen, which drew 77,000. It was well organized and well publicized, it was given a fashionable send-off by the Governor-General, interest was whipped up by lectures and escorted tours of school children, but the public just did not seem to be enthusiastic enough about fine china, graceful furniture and ornate silver, however valuable or important historically, however charming or, in their own way, beautiful. Apparently people want to see pictures more than anything else, and they don't go to the eighteenth century for them. There were some good ones in the show—Watteau, Fra-

gonard, Pater, Chardin, Gainsborough, Reynolds and so on—and some fine drawings from the Pierpont Morgan collection; but I know painters (to say nothing of the general public) who didn't have enough curiosity to go near them: they felt that the eighteenth century had nothing to say to them.

Toronto originated three of the important shows—the 50th anniversary exhibition of contemporary English, French and American painting, and the retrospectives of Lawren Harris and Arthur Lismer. The latter were hung concurrently, in adjoining galleries, and were abridged. I did not see the original shows in either Toronto or Ottawa, but I am told that the smaller editions were easier to look at and, while we missed a few significant pieces, both painters were presented in the full scope of their work.

Another visitor was the Water Colour Society show, and we had the Pegi Nicol MacLeod exhibition organized by the National Gallery. For the rest, we depended on ourselves.

The Eastern Group, which first appeared before the public in 1938, has not been seen much, as a group, in recent years, and it was good to have John Lyman, Goodridge Roberts, Eric Goldberg and Philip Surrey brought together again in one gallery. They are all individuals, of course, quite unlike each other, but they have in common a serious concern with the art of painting. I felt that they had all developed. Without sacrificing his subtlety, Lyman has gained in spontaneity; Goldberg is still a romantic painter but he is looking more closely at the Canadian scene instead of dwelling on his memories and imaginings of Europe; Surrey goes on painting the streets and cafés, but he is not so much the storyteller now and he has dropped the sinister overtones and much of the melancholy; Roberts was represented by vividly animated still lifes.

Six well-known Montreal women painters showed their familiar styles in a harmonious exhibition of about sixty works—Ethel Seath

ALBERT  
HENRY  
ROBINSON

*Laurentian  
Village*

*West End  
Art Gallery,  
Montreal*



ERIC GOLDBERG

*Basket Weavers*

*Dominion Gallery,  
Montreal*

# THE DOMINION GALLERY

announces the opening of its new home  
1438 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST, MONTREAL

on three floors, in eight show-rooms,  
four halls and a library,  
will be displayed

Paintings by Outstanding Canadian and European Artists  
also on sale works of art by Old and Modern Masters

OUR PRESENT GALLERY  
1448 ST. CATHERINE STREET WEST, MONTREAL  
will continue to be open

Daily 9.30 to 6  
Closed Sunday



MAX STERN, Ph.D.

## PAINTINGS BY

Emily Carr	Albert H. Robinson	Louis Muhlstock
Clarence Gagnon	Kathleen Morris	Ernst Neumann

Fine examples by European painters also on view

## WEST END ART GALLERY

1015 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST, NEAR PEEL  
MONTREAL Telephone LA. 0356  
Collections taken on consignment

staying close to the thing seen but working toward geometrical abstraction; Kathleen Morris lovingly portraying Quebec in soft contours and mellow colour; Mabel Lockerby playing fancifully with the small, intimate things of the woods; Anne Savage working imaginatively in strong landscape design. Beatrice Hampson and Norah Collyer have not yet developed as much individuality as the others.

These are of an older tradition. The newer trends were exhibited by a group consisting of Ghitta Caiserman, Marion Aronson, Betty

Sutherland and Alfred Pinsky. Miss Aronson, who shows a warm sympathy with both the earth and with paint, is beginning to shed the influence of Goodridge Roberts. The others have broken away from the Canadian landscape tradition. Miss Caiserman and Mr. Pinsky are still struggling to digest Ben Shahn and some of the other modern Americans. Painting the seamy side of city life, their work is harsh and arid, but full of promise. They are exploring a life that should be investigated by the painter and in time they will no doubt find the adequate expression. Miss Sutherland

is concerned with people, too, but, influenced by Europeans like Daumier, she is a much more subtle and ingratiating painter.

It is not the policy of the Museum of Fine Arts to hang one-man shows, but two-man shows are an accepted part of the season's programme. Pegi Nicol MacLeod's neighbour in the contemporary arts room was the Montreal painter and etcher, Ernst Neumann, whose sober, almost academic discipline was a striking contrast to Pegi's exuberance. He is primarily a portrait painter and I found his figures more interesting than his landscapes. A month later, Fritz Brandtner and Léon Bellefleur were contrasted. Brandtner is well known as a powerful inventor. Bellefleur is an inventor on another plane of experience. "If Brandtner's paintings come out of a clear head and a boundless physical energy," I said in the *Star*, "if they belong to the healthy sunlight, Léon Bellefleur's are dredged up out of the darkness of the subconscious." Both are abstract painters, but the one is something of an engineer and the other is a dreamer, tangled in the surrealist jungles of the mind.

For the solo shows, you go to the dealers, to the Cercle Universitaire, the Arts Club or some other semi-public place, or to the artist's own studio. One man, François Déziel, tried to hold an open-air show on St. Catherine Street,

but he neglected to get a permit and the police moved him on.

The most interesting new comer as far as I was concerned was Suzanne Guité, a young woman from the Gaspé who studied in Chicago under Moholy-Nagy and is now back home after some years in Europe. Her first Canadian show, held at the Cercle Universitaire, consisted of eager and individual drawings in oil of Italian streets, nude studies and wood sculptures. Whether as a painter or a sculptor, I believe she will make an important contribution to Canadian art. She is a powerful carver, full of respect for the character of the wood. Her conception of Adam, human yet animal, folded up like an embryo, and of a mother and child, clinging together, the one body a part of the other, not only went back to fundamentals but enabled her to remain firmly within the column of the tree.

Two veteran painters, Albert Henry Robinson, nearly seventy and ill, and H. Mabel May, packing up to retire to Vancouver, were given large retrospective shows, the one at the West End Gallery and the other at the Dominion. Although he has a distinguished place in Canadian painting, Robinson has been so little in the public eye of late that he is almost a forgotten man, and I was glad of the opportunity to survey his work from his beginnings in

H. MABEL MAY

*Immigrants,  
Bonaventure Station,  
1913*

*Dominion Gallery,  
Montreal*





delicate impressionism to the broad flat patterns of his later years, broad and Canadian, but at the same time reserved. Miss May began as an impressionist, too, and developed solidity and austerity, but she has always been a healthy, joyous painter, taking pleasure in people as well as in light and landscape.

Eric Goldberg had a one-man show at the Dominion. The muscular extrovert, René Richard, whose work tends toward the illustrative, reported on rugged Ungava and the Saguenay with appropriate robustness at L'Art Français, and another man of vigour, Sam Borenstein turned up at the Classic Bookshop. Borenstein is not so accomplished as Richard but he is in some respects more interesting. He is a natural force, a sort of van Gogh, whose vitality needs direction.

While I am speaking of the dealers, I should mention the collection of nineteenth and twentieth century paintings, mostly French, Mr. Eilers of Amsterdam brought to the Watson Galleries. He had samples, some good though none very important, of Renoir, Fantin-Latour, Boudin, Gauguin, Sisley, Utrillo, Dufy, Picasso, Laurencin, Edzard and others. As a sort of foreword to the eighteenth century show, the Dominion Gallery put on view about thirty paintings from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, largely from the Low Countries. One of the earliest, and one of the most interesting, was Jan de Cock's *St. John on Patmos*, painted about 1510. It has an unworldly magic that set it apart from the substantial down-to-earth, matter-of-fact tradition represented in the other paintings, by such men as Jan Mytens, Giles van Tilborg, Hieronymous Janssens and Dirk Hals.

No fewer than 1,500 works were submitted to the 67th Spring Exhibition at the Museum, but only about a tenth of them managed to get past the two juries. In the old days, the public was faced with as many as 600 exhibits, so this annual isn't the ordeal it used to be. The usual suave and competent academic portraits and landscapes were to be found in the orthodox section and many of the pictures submitted to Jury 2 ran to the other extreme.

Nevertheless, some of the automatists and other contemporary *fauves* were not satisfied

that their view of art and the world was properly represented and they staged a demonstration with placards, following it up with an exhibition of their own in a former dance studio. They called themselves "Les Rebelles" and on an enormous banner spread across the front of the building announced their "*campagne d'assainissement contre l'ar-rivisme bourgeois infestant le jury de l'Art Association*". Paul-Emile Borduas and a few others who actually had been accepted by the jury joined them and some good things were hung up on the web of string, but most of the stuff was no more worthy of serious consideration than the notorious totem pole Adam which caused a scandal when it was arrested and taken to the police station. (Happily released, it was exhibited by the Rebels, but it was too tall for the studio and had to lie on its face.) Exhibitionism is not always art and I felt that the Rebels would do better if they went quietly about their work, giving themselves time to mature and remembering that self-expression is nothing unless there is a self to express.

This brings me to the amateurs, who accounted for such a large proportion of the half-year's exhibitions. They were once satisfied to have a picture hung in the Spring Show, but when the Spring Show began tightening up and turned inhospitable they gathered together in the Independent Art Association or the Amateur Art Club and also blossomed out in one-man shows. If they can't get a sponsor to put them up at the Cercle Universitaire or fail to find another haven, they hang their works in their own homes and send out printed invitations. There is a lot to be said for amateur painting. I believe the amateur should enjoy his hobby and perhaps share his fun with indulgent friends, but I think he goes too far in seeking public recognition. As a newspaper critic, I have been embarrassed by demands for professional attention. No good purpose would have been served had I given it. I could see no sense in handing out the "boosts" some of them innocently requested and nothing would have been gained by hurting their feelings. I acted on the principle that kindness lay in resisting the pressure.



# Coast to Coast in Art

GEORGES ROUAULT

*Head of Christ*

*The National Gallery  
of Canada*

*A recent accession*



## **A Government Commission for A. Y. Jackson**

Last year the Department of Mines and Resources (now the Department of Resources and Development) commissioned A. Y. Jackson to do a series of paintings of the Canadian North. The choice of this senior Canadian artist was good, for this is the kind of country to which the talents of Mr. Jackson are particularly well suited. In mid-June these paintings were put on show at Eaton's Fine Art Galleries in Toronto. Great Bear Lake, Yellowknife, Eldorado, Hay River—these were the hard core of the subject matter, and as an artistic documentary of that kind of Canada they succeed well. All are in oil, some sombre, some colourful, and in each is the familiar Jackson capacity for simplified design. The Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences should use this valuable precedent as the basis of a firm recommendation. State commissions of this nature give enlightened support to the arts, and are in the permanent interests of Canada.

## **A Change in Exhibition Policy**

The Vancouver Art Gallery has fallen in line with most other public galleries in announcing a change in its exhibitions policy: henceforth exhibitions of work by living artists will take place on invitation only, that is to say local painters will no longer have the privilege of asking for and being allotted space in which to display their own one-man shows. Painters may, however, apply for participation in one of a series of annual quarterly group shows, each comprising work by three or four painters. This is a fortunate provision in a centre where there are no commercial galleries to provide an alternative audience.

## **Maritime Art Association elects New Officers**

The Maritime Art Association held its annual convention in Saint John in May of this year. Lawren P. Harris, head of the department of Fire Arts at Mount Allison University, Sackville,

was elected president for the coming year. Assisting him will be the following officers: Nova Scotia Vice-President, Donald Mackay of the Nova Scotia College of Art; P.E.I. Vice-President, Miss Frances Johnston of Charlottetown; New Brunswick Vice-President, Mr. Charles Foss of Saint John; Treasurer, Edward Pulford of Mount Allison University; Secretary, Mrs. Wilfrid E. Clarke of Saint John; Exhibition Director, Mrs. Gordon Ritchie of Moncton; Kodachrome Slide Directors, Mrs. Lawrence Hashey of Fredericton and Professor A. S. Mowatt of Halifax; *Canadian Art* Regional Representative, Professor C. I. Lambertson of Halifax.

It was decided that two Maritime exhibitions would be assembled this fall, and serious consideration was given to ways and means by which more exhibitions, which previously have all too often by-passed the Maritimes, could be obtained.

### **Canadian Art goes to Washington**

On the invitation of The National Gallery, Washington, an important collection of 80 Canadian paintings has been assembled by the National Gallery of Canada for showing in the capital of the United States. The exhibition will open on October 29 and after a month in Washington will go on tour of other American cities. It will also be presented later in Vancouver.

Most of the paintings are by living artists, but a few earlier works have also been included so that something of the background of Canadian art can be grasped as well as its contemporary flavour.

*Editor's note: The colour plate of the painting by Prudence Heward on the cover of this issue is from the book The Growth of Canadian Painting by Donald W. Buchanan being published by Collins, London and Toronto, this November. It will contain 16 colour plates of similar size and 64 monochrome illustrations.*

## **NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS**

**THE LANGUAGE OF PAINTING.** By Charles Johnson. 181 pp. + 80 plates. Cambridge: at the University Press. \$7.00.

This is a practical book for those people who want to know what kind of a picture they are looking at, how to look at it and what to look for. It is written by a man who has been official lecturer at the National Gallery, London, for 17 years. The text of the book deals with painting from 1250 to 1890 and is based on his lectures given to audiences in that Gallery. The half-tone reproductions, nearly all of examples in the National Gallery collection, are used as reference material to the text. The opening chapters consider the various fundamental attitudes of the artist, as, for instance, the "structural ideal" and the "impressionist ideal". Following this is a classification of the subject-matter painting has covered, explaining what should be expected of a portrait, a landscape or a still life, and so on. Next, the elements of design in picture making, line, perspective, three dimensions, light and colour are dealt with and the various techniques of painting. The text then ends with a few words on the "ethics of painting" and two final chapters on the "virtues and vices" of both paintings and painters—all in one hundred and eighty odd pages.

It seems unfortunate that this book is titled *The Language of Painting*. Rather, it would be more correct if it were called "A Grammar of Painting". The word "language" implies the meaning of communication in the fullest and most coherent sense, leading to complete understanding. Whereas this book reads and is arranged like a grammar, breaking down

and parsing every passage of painting from Duccio to Cézanne. The author assures the reader that painting cannot be held by hard and fast rule. He then, for example, as in the chapters dealing with light, classifies the various ways light can be handled: the proper proportion of light and shade in a picture; the linear effect on the design of a picture by light; unsymmetrical lighting; the creation of dark objects against light and vice versa; light to emphasize the centre of interest; concentrated, diffused and broken light; the rendering of light by Titian, by El Greco, Rembrandt and Constable; the special differences of light in Turner's early, middle and late periods. This methodical analysis and classification is also applied to chapters on colour, line, three-dimensional design and perspective. The techniques of painting are similarly covered. The lecturer's pointer probes well each square inch of canvas, finding every brush stroke, every relationship of form, every passage of colour.

The question arises, does the parsing of every line of poetry—still the habitual class-room technique of many professors of English—develop a greater enjoyment of poetry? Or, as in this case, is the analysis of picture structure and technique a good approach, or even the right approach, through which the interested layman may gain a greater enjoyment and real understanding of painting which is the stated purpose of this book? Certainly he will gain for himself a greater knowledge of things surrounding painting. He will be able to identify various techniques. He will recognize the elements of the picture. Will he,

however, with this knowledge perceive the greater underlying understanding and meaning of all art, past and present?

This brings up another point, present or contemporary art. Painting did not stop at 1890. What about 1950? With a situation in our own time extending from the classical Mondrian to the romantic Pollock, one chapter of six pages, titled "Abstraction and Surrealism", is a ridiculous gesture in a modern publication labelled *The Language of Painting*. Seventeen years is a long time in our age to lecture inside the National Gallery without taking a look outside.

B. C. BINNING

#### FLEMISH ARTISTS OF THE VALOIS COURTS.

By Ruth Massey Tovell. 157 pp. + 49 plates + 11 in colour. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. \$11.00.

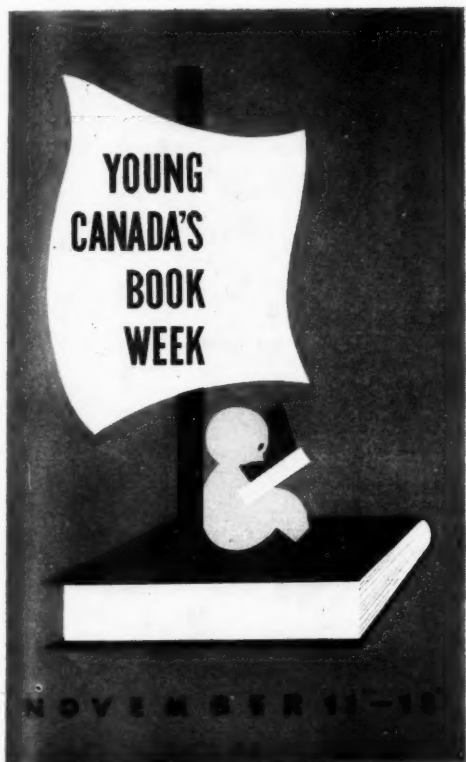
This book, lavishly produced, has not been written for scholars. The author, apparently a person of taste and sensitivity, is quite modest in this respect and nowhere lays claim to new insights or discoveries. She has read conscientiously a great many of the

previous publications in the field and has made use of the findings of other scholars, to whom she freely gives credit. Except for the Van Eyck problem where she follows with a disciple's zeal Renders' elimination of Hubert Van Eyck, she has steered clear of controversial issues. If the book were anything like a complete survey of its chosen field one would of course accept its lack of originality and be grateful to find assembled in one volume information scattered about in many places. Mrs. Tovell's book, however, offers only a selection which, although indicated in a coyly "baroque" subtitle, is not justified anywhere in the text and seems to have been made on purely personal grounds. In addition, the book is disappointing because of a considerable number of errors (e.g. "the Romanesque cathedral of Brussels" for Gothic St. Gudule), mistaken translations (of passages from Duerer and Tolnay, for instance) and hazy historical notions ("the Gothic idea of the dignity of labor").

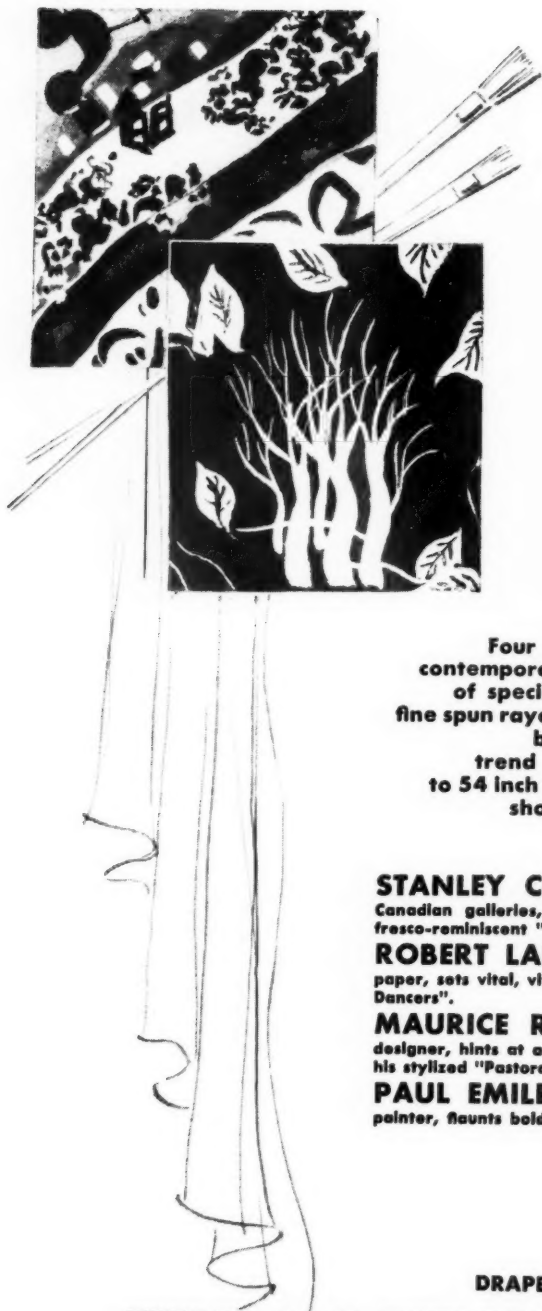
Whether the book will attract the art-loving layman is also open to doubt. The characterization of works of art is without lustre, and there are few passages which might make one see things with new eyes. ("Sweet and gentle" are the author's words for as hard a face of a woman one would ever wish to see, that of the wife of the donor of the Ghent altar-piece). In the Van Eyck question, the author goes to such lengths of purely art-historical argumentation, including a ten-page resumé of Renders' thesis, that it would seem few, if any, "general" readers would be interested enough to follow her.

There remain, of course, the illustrations. Those in black and white, with only a few exceptions, are quite good; the ten in colour, all of the so-called "Brussels Hours", are excellent. This they already were when they were used in Fierens-Gevaert's publication of that manuscript. It was a nice idea to make them available again, though the fact that they had been used before might have been mentioned. They show well the delicate craftsmanship and sumptuous elegance which are typical of the products of this school. Even if we may hesitate to call the princes of the Valois courts "an enlightened aristocracy", as the author does, we must on the evidence of such stunning creations give them credit for the support of some of the finest artists of their time. These plates also go a long way to explain Mrs. Tovell's evident enthusiasm for the Franco-Flemish miniaturists, and they will enable some of her readers to share in it.

JULIUS S. HELD



Winning poster by Gilles Carle, student at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Montreal, in the competition for a poster for Young Canada Book Week, sponsored by the Canadian Library Association



## CANADIAN ARTISTS DESIGN IMAGINATIVE NEW FABRICS

Four young Canadian artists bring contemporary art into your home . . . in the form of specially-designed silk screen prints on a fine spun rayon twill. Colors, clear, strong, vibrant, bring you the first hint of a new trend for Fall. Canadart Fabrics, in 48 to 54 inch widths, yard 4.50. An innovation, shown first and only in Toronto at Simpson's.

**STANLEY COSGROVE**, whose work hangs in leading Canadian galleries, designedly spaces drifting leaves among his fresco-reminiscent "Trees".

**ROBERT LAPALME**, witty caricaturist of a Montreal paper, sets vital, vivid little figures on a reverse stripe in "Country Dancers".

**MAURICE RAYMOND**, illustrator and stage-set designer, hints at a simple but very sophisticated French Canada in his stylized "Pastoral Scene".

**PAUL EMILE BORDUAS**, leading Canadian abstract painter, haunts bold rhythmic design in his colorful "Abstract Fish".

*Simpson's*

DRAPERIES-FOURTH FLOOR - TORONTO,

SIMPSON Stores Located in TORONTO, LONDON, MONTREAL, HALIFAX, REGINA

**RUSSIAN ART. FROM SCYTHS TO SOVIETS.**  
By Cyril G. E. Bunt. 272 pp. London and New York: The Studio. 21/-

After some years of taking pride in the gallant stand of Russian troops who were our allies in a desperate war, and several more years marked by a rising hysteria connected with any mention of "Red" and "Russia", we know alarmingly little of Russia or the Russians. Since the international political atmosphere in which we live is so little calculated to give us any real knowledge, the publication of a handy one volume survey of Russian art with over two hundred illustrations is a welcome event. It is most disappointing, therefore, that this volume, first published in 1946, falls so far short of being even adequate. In the better known fields where first-rate archaeologists and art historians have sifted the material, the presentation is compact, and the examples well chosen. Thus the sections on the fabulous Graeco-Scythian treasures of the Hermitage, the Russian developments of Byzantine church architecture and the icon are excellent summaries with just enough specific detail to hold the reader's interest while the author sketches the background of Russian history. It is in the later sections dealing with the European importations of the eighteenth century, the "Westernization" of Russian art with the academic performances of the succeeding century that the author begins to show quite distinctly that he has no clear idea himself of the relation of art to society nor any grasp of the Russian character. Most disappointing of all is the treatment of architecture, painting and sculpture under the Soviets—the very point at which one would like to be guided by the clearest insight.

There is abundant evidence in this book, even from reading between the lines, that the Russians are essentially barbarians on whom were grafted from time to time strong shoots of foreign art expressions that flourished with the vigorous transfusion of strong Russian sap.

First came the Greeks who in the sixth century B.C. established a colony among the Asiatic Scyths, providing handsome gold and silver vessels and decorations often made by Greek craftsmen and sometimes by Greek-trained natives. The Slavs who lived in the wooded country to the north formed a confederation in the ninth century A.D. and were shortly after converted to Christianity. For several centuries the Russians built churches and provided decorations for them with holy zeal. At first the architects and icon painters were Greeks who brought with them the splendour and humanism of the Byzantine empire. Architects were trained in Constantinople and painters worked according to the strict canons laid down by Mt. Athos. All of these, including goldsmiths, enamellers and embroiderers, while they developed Russian characteristics, grew from Byzantine roots. The great flowering came in the fifteenth century with the Novgorod School of icon painting which produced the master, Rublev, himself the pupil of a Greek master. The author's summary

of both architecture and painting under the Byzantine influence is excellent.

Another section which opens up some of the richest territory in Russian art is that on folk art. Here is the core which has maintained itself almost up to the present, the popular arts as against the sophisticated grafts which affected only the much smaller circles of clergy and court. Every village, almost every household, was isolated by the vast distances of the country and the severe winters. One gets a glimpse of the firesides where remote pagan myths with Finnish, Arabic, Mongol and Persian elements were told and sung and worked their way into the forms and decorations of wood carvings and embroideries. Here were the roots of the great compositions of Rimsky-Korsakof and Stravinsky as well as those décors of the ballet which astonished the western world early in our century.

Part of the machinery of "Westernizing" Russia in the eighteenth century was the establishing of a Fine Arts Academy, entirely staffed in the beginning by French Academicians. The Russian baroque style was developed with great skill and sensibility by an Italian with French training who was responsible for the Winter Palace and the famous country residence of Tsarskoe Seloe with its long gallery by the Scottish architect, Cameron. Little indication is given of the passion of the eighteenth century court for contemporary French and English silver, china, furniture and other decorations, to the extent that many



## Beautiful Art Books

### THE ARTS

This handsome British book is a comprehensive survey of painting, drawing, sculpture and architecture. Every point is illustrated with examples from the work of the great masters. Specially arranged for teachers and students. 384 pages, over 265 illustrations, 15 in full colour. \$2.75.

### PAINTING AS A PASTIME

By The Right Honourable Winston S. Churchill. In two typically stimulating essays, the author tells about his hobby of painting. "It should be a gift book for those who paint, want to paint, or find all things Churchillian of interest."—*The Narrator*. With sixteen pages of full-colour plates of Churchill's paintings. \$2.75.

**THE RYERSON PRESS  
TORONTO**

# GRAPHIS

## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR GRAPHIC AND APPLIED ART

AMSTUTZ & HERDEG      GRAPHIS PRESS      ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



### Canadian Comments on GRAPHIS

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ARTS: We stress the importance of GRAPHIS to our eight hundred students . . . Your commentaries are excellent as are typography, illustration, etc. in their juxtaposed harmony.

C. C. STEWART, ART DIRECTOR, Rolph-Clark-Stone Ltd., Toronto: The material selected by your editors covers a much broader range than in any other journal of similar nature heretofore. The fact that GRAPHIS displays work, both ancient and modern, from all parts of the world and in a wide variety of techniques and mediums makes it a most valued journal for everybody associated with advertising and the graphic arts.



Please detach and send to: Dr. Charles Heitz, 16 West 90th Street, New York 24, N.Y.

Please enter my/our subscription to GRAPHIS

- ☐ for 6 copies Can. \$15.40 (U.S. \$14.00)  
☐ for 12 copies Can. \$28.40 (U.S. \$26.00)  
☐ starting with current number

- ☐ starting with back number (No. ....)  
☐ check is enclosed  
☐ please send bill

Nos. 11 to 30, except Nos. 18, 21, 22, are still available

Name ..... Address .....  
 City ..... Zone ..... Province .....

## CONTINENTAL GALLERIES

Paintings by

MORRICE — KRIEGHOFF — ARBUCKLE  
 GARSIDE — RIORDON — BOUCHARD

and other Leading Canadian and European Artists

1450 DRUMMOND STREET

MONTREAL

workshops in Paris did little else than cater to the Russian trade and tastes. It is not made clear either that all of this activity affected none but court circles.

Since the author gives no indication of any critical standards that can be applied to selecting or discussing the buildings, paintings or sculptures of the drearily academic nineteenth century, it is not surprising that he is completely at a loss in writing of the contemporary arts of Russia. Although his aim was historical rather than critical it is impossible to choose examples and comment on them without some aes-

thetic basis. His sympathies are obviously with the piously classicizing type of architecture which can be described as "a fine pile"—the same type of empty pomposity favoured by Hitler and Mussolini as well as, alas!, much of capitalist America. In painting he tries to reconcile the trite and arid academic subject of noble intentions with the vague and undefined "Socialist Realism" advocated by the Party chiefs. He admits that when the Soviet painter searches for subjects which will give "true-to-life" pictures, he is often enough content to leave them to compose them-



selves. We must remember, however, that this account of Russian art was written at a time when we were very polite about everything Russian. We still need a clear headed account of Soviet art which is at least aware that the Great Social Experiment, in rejecting the experimental art of its time has plumped for the kind of building and painting that delights the most reactionary capitalist.

ROBERT TYLER DAVIS

**THE CRAFT OF THE LEAD PENCIL.** By Mervyn Peake. 22 pp. + 6 plates + illustrations in the text. London: Allan Wingate. (Canadian Distributors: Longmans, Green and Co.) \$1.50.

This is a small volume of twenty pages filled with attractive diagrams and drawings by a fine draughtsman. Mr. Peake steers clear of dull, tiresome theories and gives the reader the sound basic advice that is most stimulating. He treats the subject as a craft, and not as an art. His potent message is clear, to the point, and he does not pull his punches. The book will be appreciated as much by the teacher as the beginner and student. After reading it, the reviewer feels a refreshing change from the discipline of facts and of form found in most books on the subject.

CHARLES GOLDHAMER

## THE ART FORUM

Dear Sir:

Modern artists, we know, are addicted to obscure names for abstract paintings; however, I think you will find an exception in Michael Mitchell. The painting of his, (which you in your summer number and which the 50th anniversary show at the Toronto Gallery are pleased to call *Portrait of a Fisherman*) makes a great deal more sense to even my undiscerning eyes under the title, *Winter Still Life*.

I was much amused on opening night of the Toronto show (when the numbers in the catalogue were obviously switched) to observe a lady carefully pointing out the "fisherman" in the *Winter Still Life* painting to her very puzzled companion.

It was quite by accident that I came across your interesting publication in a downtown department store. May I add that it appealed to me immediately?

Yours truly,

JAMES GRAHAM, Toronto.

*Editor's note: We copied the incorrect titling as given in the Exhibition of Contemporary Canadian Arts and apologize to reader Graham for not having had the perspicacity to notice the absence of the "fisherman".*

### CONTRIBUTORS

**Gudrun Parker** has produced some distinguished documentary films for the National Film Board of Canada including *Children's Concerts* which recently won Honorable Mention at the Venice Film Festival. She was born and educated in Winnipeg.

**Sidney Watson** is vice-principal of the School of Design, Ontario College of Art. His paintings are shown regularly in Canadian exhibitions.

## MODERN ARTISTRY IN ALUMINUM



### NOW AVAILABLE

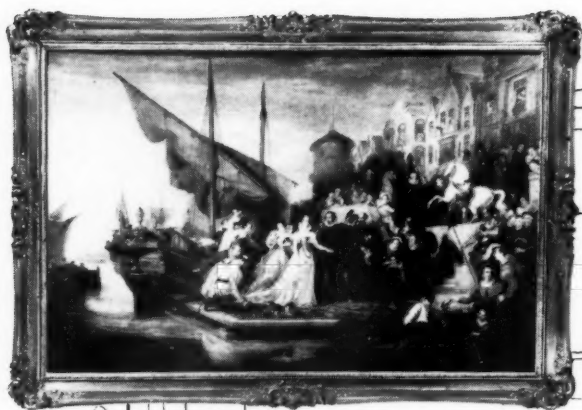
for your home. Functional lighting designed for beauty of appearance and lighting perfection. Alumilite finish—will not tarnish. Mail orders accepted. Price \$25.00 express prepaid.

Write to

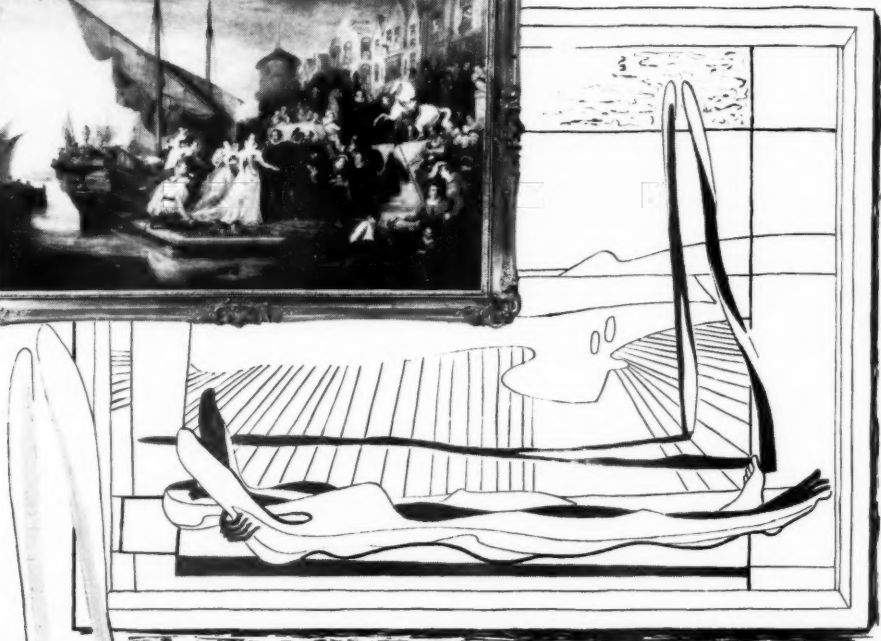
**LIGHTING MATERIALS LIMITED**

803 ERIN ST.

WINNIPEG



**EATON'S**



The **Old** and **NEW** meet in the Fine Art Galleries, where collector, student, amateur and professional artist alike find lasting pleasure and inspiration from the treasures of Old Masters and the fresh approach of Moderns.

*The Fine Art Galleries, Eaton's College Street, Toronto*

**EATON'S — CANADA'S LARGEST RETAIL ORGANIZATION  
... STORES AND ORDER OFFICES FROM COAST TO COAST**



FINE ART  
COMMERCIAL ART  
CRAFTS  
CERAMICS FOR  
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Eight months \$40.00

*Write for Art Department Prospectus*

**THE PROVINCIAL INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY AND ART**  
CALGARY, ALBERTA

## REPEAT OFFER

To the many who were disappointed last time we offered this item (we were sold out within a week)

### EL GRECO

The famous Hyperion Edition, 16 reproductions in full colour, 36 reproductions in gravure. Large 13" x 11" size.

Regular \$6.95

Special! While they last! **2.49** postage paid

**Classic Bookshop**

1380 ST. CATHERINE WEST

MONTREAL, P.Q.

# ART AS A CAREER

Study with successful artists in these fields:

Diploma courses in

ADVERTISING ART

DRAWING AND PAINTING

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

DESIGN SCULPTURE

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

GENERAL CRAFT COURSES

*For prospectus write*

**THE ONTARIO  
COLLEGE of ART**

GRANGE PARK

TORONTO

THE HOUSE OF REEVES



WAS FOUNDED IN 1766

To name our oil colours after that brilliant Spanish Artist, Goya, meant accepting a responsibility that could only be justified by our reputation as Artists' Colourmen for the finest pigments, made in England.

In "Goya" Oils we have a range of brilliant, smooth working colours which we feel confident will meet the needs of the most exacting Artists.

at your dealer or from

**REEVES**

& Sons (Canada) Ltd.

120 RICHMOND STREET WEST, TORONTO



# THE STUDIO

is more than an illustrated magazine. It is an ever-changing gallery of art in print. Its colour plates are famous for their high qualities of reproduction. You can see in it each month illustrations in colour and black-and-white of the world's most interesting works of art. Excellent reproductions of paintings, carvings, ceramics, etchings and other examples of man-created beauty show its readers the products of artists everywhere. The Studio makes an ideal gift for a friend and an investment in pleasure for yourself. A year's subscription costs 30s. post free, single copies 2s. 6d.

Order through your newsagent, bookseller or the publishers.

THE STUDIO LTD. 66 CHANDOS PLACE LONDON WC2, ENGLAND

## SAINT JOHN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

*Courses in Fine and Applied Art*

OLD MASTER TECHNIQUES

MURAL PAINTING

BOOK ILLUSTRATION

TEXTILE DESIGN-LETTERING

FASHION ILLUSTRATION

*Prospectus on Request*



## MOUNT ALLISON

SCHOOL OF

## FINE & APPLIED ARTS

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY, SACKVILLE, N. B.

### ● THREE YEAR COURSES

leading to Certificates in  
Fine or Applied Arts.

### ● FOUR YEAR COURSE

leading to a  
Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree.

Lawren P. Harris, A.R.C.A., O.S.A., Director  
Prospectus on request.

## FINE AND INDUSTRIAL ART



## VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF ART

Cambie & Dunsmuir Director: Charles H. Scott, A.R.C.A.

PROSPECTUS FREE ON APPLICATION

# Antiques

FURNITURE

CHINA

SILVER & SHEFFIELD

OIL PAINTINGS



*Portrait by Van Der Aa*  
MAURICE GAGNON, Honorary Attaché of the  
National Museums of France—and who is in  
charge of our Art Section.

## MORGAN GALLERIES INC.

*Dealers in Antiques & Works of Art*

442 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST  
MONTREAL

*Selected Paintings*

*by*

*Canadian Artists of Merit*

## WATSON ART GALLERIES

1434 SHERBROOKE ST. WEST  
MONTREAL

IF YOU HAVE STOPPED USING  
CASEIN—THEN TRY . . .

**GRUMBACHER**  
GENUINE  
*Casein*  
COLOR  
FOR ARTISTS

ON YOUR NEXT PAINTING  
—use a complete palette of wonderful  
NEW Genuine Casein and judge for  
yourself why artists are changing to  
caseins made by GRUMBACHER

If you have never tried these Genuine Caseins before, you will be amazed and pleased with the unlimited possibilities they offer for painting in any technique . . . aquarelle, gouache, tempera or oil painting style . . . without changing your own method of painting.

NO OTHER CASEIN OFFERS YOU SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE

- Drying time that you alone can control.
- Soft usable colors . . . even after days on the palette.
- Most permanent and brilliant of any casein colors.
- Lowest cost per tube because they go farther and last longer.

For your protection insist on the name GRUMBACHER on all your  
artists' material

**M. GRUMBACHER**

OF CANADA LTD.



COLORS ARTISTS MATERIAL BRUSHES

Fill out coupon for FREE illustrated  
Casein Booklet and Color Card

name .....

address .....

city ..... prov. ....



THE RUNGE PRESS LIMITED  
OTTAWA CANADA





LIMITED  
CANADA